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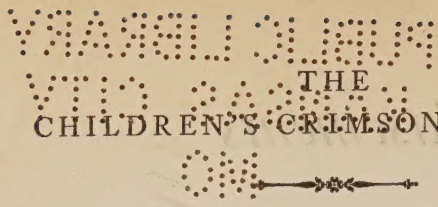
# *Magic Casements*




EDITED BY KATE DOUGLAS WIGGIN
AND NORA ARCHIBALD SMITH

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# MAGIC CASEMENTS

## *A Second Fairy Book*

EDITED BY

KATE DOUGLAS WIGGIN and
NORA ARCHIBALD SMITH

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NEW YORK 1938

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Magic Casements, open wide!
Little Wonder-Eyes inside,—
Safe within the firelit room,
Longs to pierce the gathering gloom,
View the shapes that twist and twirl,
Hear the faery winds that whirl.

Magic Casements, open wide!
Brier Roses, bend aside!
Golden-Hair, the maiden sweet,
Waits the Lover-Prince to greet.
Toss of feather, glint of lance,
See his elfin guard advance!

Magic Casements, open wide!
Ebb and flow, thou faery tide!
Eager-Heart, the dauntless lad,
Glimpses galleys, armor-clad,
Manned by heroes, sailing home
From the Land of Mosque and Dome.

*Close not, Casements, till their eyes*
*Visions see of Paradise.*

N. A. S.

# *PREFACE*

DID *you ever read of the Prince of Serendib who, in his quest for a certain treasure, discovered a hundred other objects of infinite value which he had not been looking for at all?*

*So, in editing our first fairy book, and searching for certain treasure stories to adorn it, we came upon myriads of other gems which clamored by their very brilliancy to be borne away and set where their beauty might more readily be seen. Some of these gems you will find in the present volume, gathered from the fairy mines of many distant countries—Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Spain, France, Germany, England, Russia, Italy, Roumania, Africa, Japan, Southern India, as well as from the treasure-houses of our own American Indians. The stories are a little more elaborate, more poetic, more romantic in tone than those in "The Fairy Ring," for our audience has grown a year older since the publication of the first volume, and we have reserved for the future certain fantastic, extravagant, wonderful, and mirth-provoking tales which do not properly belong with these graceful narratives of fairy stratagems and loves, fairy sorrows and triumphs.*

*We have called this book "Magic Casements," mindful of the famous line of the poet-youth, John Keats: "... Magic Casements opening on the foam of perilous seas in faery lands forlorn." We have imagined children of all ages as gazing,*

*spellbound, through these enchanted windows—Little Wonder-Eyes, the wistful child; Eager-Heart, the adventurous boy, and Golden-Hair, the dreaming maiden. The perils will not seriously affright them, nor the lands seem too forlorn, for they have learned that there is really nothing so light-hearted nor so fortunate as a fairy, after all; and be their favorite princess never so hedged about with dangers they know (and we do believe* she *knows, too), that at the end of the chapter she marries the prince and lives happily ever after. Childhood has this in common with the dwellers in fairyland that ogres have no power to prevail against its simplicity, its innocence, and its unconsciousness of evil.*

*Eager-Heart and Wonder-Eyes,*
*Golden-Hair, maid dear and wise,*
*Seas of Peril will not harm.*
*Vile Enchanters cast no charm,—*
*So the Book of Magic saith,—*
*If you keep your childhood faith.*

*K. D. W.*
*N. A. S.*

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# *Magic Casements*

# *Maid Lena*

ONCE upon a time there was a farmer who had three sons. The eldest was called Peter, the second Paul, and the third Esben. Now Peter and Paul were a couple of strong, wide-awake lads; they could hear, and see, and laugh, and play, and sow, and reap, so they were very useful to their father. But the youngest was a poor sort of do-nothing fellow, who never had a word to say, but went mooning about like one in a dream, or sat over the fire and raked up the ashes; so they called him Esben Ash-rake.

The farm stood amid fertile fields and fair green meadows; but in their midst lay a tract of barren, worthless moorland, strewn over with stones and overgrown with heather. Here Esben loved to lie asleep and dreaming, or staring up at the sky.

Peter and Paul, however, could not bear to see that bit of waste land, so their father gave them leave to see what they could do with it. True, there was an old story about the land belonging to the fairies, but, of course, that was all nonsense. So Peter and Paul set to work with a will; they dug up all the stones, and put them in a heap on one side; and then they plowed and sowed their new field. They sowed it with wheat, and it did well all through the winter, and in the spring gave promise of a splendid crop.

Not one of their other fields looked half so well, until Midsummer Eve, when there came a sudden end to all their satisfaction—for on that night the whole crop was utterly destroyed. The entire field looked as if it had been trodden under foot; every blade of wheat was so crushed and beaten down that it could never recover or lift itself up again.

No one could understand how such a thing had happened, so there remained nothing to do but plow the field afresh, and let the grass grow.

Next spring there was finer and better grass there than in any of their meadows, but just the same thing happened again. On Midsummer Eve all the grass was trodden down and beaten out as if with a flail, so they got no profit out of the field that year. Then they plowed it once more, let it lie fallow through the winter, and in the spring sowed their field with flax. It came up beautifully, and before Midsummer Eve was in full flower. It was a pretty sight, and Peter and Paul surveyed it with pride and joy; but, remembering what had taken place the two former years, they agreed that one of them should keep watch there on the fateful night. Peter, as the eldest, wished to undertake this duty; so, arming himself with a stout cudgel, he sat down on the great bank of stones he had helped to pile up when they cleared the land.

It was a beautifully mild evening, clear and still. Peter quite meant to keep wide awake. For all that, however, he fell asleep, and never woke till midnight, when there came a fearful rushing and roaring overhead, that made the ground beneath him shake and tremble; and when he tried to look about him the whole sky was pitchy black. But in the midst of it all, there shone something red that looked like a fiery dragon, and the whole field seemed to roll from side to side, till he began to feel as if he were being tossed in a blanket; and there was such a roaring and buzzing in his ears that at last he became completely dazed. He could not bear it any longer, but was glad enough to escape with a whole skin, and get safely home.

Next day the flax lay there, trodden down and beaten out, till the whole field looked as smooth and bare as a deal board, so that after that neither Peter nor Paul cared to bestow any more labor upon the land, and the next spring the entire place was overgrown with grass and wild flowers. There were white lady's-smocks, blue corn-flowers, and scarlet poppies; the heather, too, came creeping and peeping up everywhere among

the stones and flowers, for while the brothers were working away so hard with plow and harrow, the heather had lain snugly hidden in little nooks and crannies.

And now nobody troubled himself any further about the field except Esben, who liked it far better this year than he had done the three previous summers, and he used to go there oftener than ever and lie staring up at the blue sky.

Late on Midsummer Eve he slipped out of the house (after having slept most of the day), for he meant to keep watch all that night. He wanted to know what it was that went on there every Midsummer Eve, and whether it was the work of fairy-folk or other folk.

Close to the heap of stones there stood a tall tree, an old ash that had stood there many hundred years. Esben climbed up into this tree, sat very still, and kept wide awake till midnight. Then he, too, heard a roaring and a rushing that seemed to fill the air, and he, too, saw the sky grow as dark as if a carpet were spread down over it; and out of the black sky he saw a red gleam come. It came nearer and nearer till it took the form of a fiery dragon, with three heads and three long necks. As the dragon drew nearer, the storm increased, and a whirlwind rushed round and round the field, until each single blade and stalk lay there crushed and ground down, as if it had been trampled under foot. The old ash-tree lashed about him with its branches, while its aged trunk swayed to and fro so violently that Esben had to hold on tight, lest the whirlwind should blow him away.

Then all at once it grew quite still and quiet; the sky was clear again, and instead of a dragon with three heads, Esben now saw what looked like three large swans. But as they came nearer he saw they were three young girls, partly disguised in the form and plumage of swans, with great white wings and long, flowing veils; and they sank slowly down through the air to the foot of the old ash where Esben was. Then they cast aside their feathery disguise, the wings folded themselves together, and there, at the foot of the tree, lay three white veils as fine as cobwebs. They themselves, however,

rose and danced, hand in hand, round and round the field, singing all the while.

Never had Esben heard anything so enchanting, never had he seen anything so beautiful, as these young girls in their white robes and with golden crowns upon their heads. For a long time he was afraid to move, lest he should frighten them away; but at length he slipped softly down, picked up the three white veils, and climbed as noiselessly up again.

The three swan-princesses had not noticed anything, but went on dancing round and round the meadow until three hours after midnight. Then they came back to the tree, and wanted to put on their veils again. But there were no veils to be found. They ran about, looking and looking, till at last they saw Esben up in the tree. They spoke to him, and said they were sure he had taken their veils.

"Yes," Esben told them, "he had them."

Then they entreated him to let them have them again, or they should be utterly ruined, they said. And they wept and implored, and promised to give him so much money for the veils that he would be richer than any king in the land.

Esben sat and gazed at them. How beautiful they were! So he told them they should not have their veils unless one of them would consent to be his wife.

"Ah, no," said one.

"Certainly not!" cried the second.

But the third and youngest princess said:

"Yes, only bring us our veils."

Esben gave the other two their veils, but refused to let the third have hers until she gave him her hand and a kiss, and put a ring on his finger, and promised to come and be married to him next Midsummer Eve.

"We are three sisters," answered the princess, "and were brought up in a castle that used to stand on this very spot. But a long, long time ago we were carried off by a wicked fairy, who keeps us imprisoned ten thousand miles from here, and only on Midsummer Eve are we allowed to revisit our old home. Now you must build a castle on this very spot, where our mar-

riage also can take place, and everything must be arranged on a princely scale. You may invite as many guests as you please, only not the king of the land. You shall not lack money. Break off a twig from the ash-tree you climbed, strike the largest of the stones lying at its root, and say, 'For Maid Lena!' The stone will roll back, and under it you will find all you may require. You can open and shut your treasure-house, as often as you like to repeat these words, with a stroke of the ash-twig. And so farewell till then," she said; and she wound her veil about her head, as her sisters had already done; then it spread out like two white wings, and all three princesses flew away.

At first they looked like three white swans; but they rose higher and higher till they were nothing but little white specks, and then they were lost to sight, and at the same moment the first ray of sunlight fell across the field.

For a long time Esben stood gazing after them, quite stunned with all he had seen and heard. At last he roused himself, tore a twig from the ash-tree, and struck the stone, with the words, "For Maid Lena!"

Immediately the stone rolled back, and beneath it was the entrance to a royal treasure-house, full of silver and gold, and precious stones and costly jewels, and goblets and dishes, and candelabra, all of the most artistic form and design—in short, everything was there that could adorn a king's table.

Esben took as many gold and silver coins as he could carry, struck the stone again, repeating the same words, and then went back to the farm. His father and brothers hardly knew him again; he wasn't like the same man. He walked with head erect, his hair was thrown back from his forehead, his eyes were shining, and he looked full of life and energy.

Then he told them he knew now who it was that had destroyed their harvest the three previous summers. That piece of land was not to be cultivated; but he intended building a castle there, and there his wedding was to take place next Midsummer Eve.

At first they thought he had lost his wits; but when they

saw all the silver and gold he had brought with him, they changed their opinions, and let him give what orders he pleased.

And now began a busy time, the like of which was never seen, with ax and saw, and hammer and plane, and line and trowel, so that on Midsummer Eve the castle stood complete, with tower and turret, and roof and pinnacle all glittering with gold.

Now it so happened that just before Midsummer Eve, after all the invitations were out, Esben's father and mother met the king, who had arranged a little trip into the country, and had contrived that his route should take him past the castle of which he had heard so much. Of course the farmer took off his hat to the king, who lifted his in return, and said he had heard of the grand wedding that was being prepared for his youngest son, and added:

"I should like to see him and his young bride."

Well, the farmer did not see that he could do otherwise than say that they should feel it a very great honor if the king would come to the wedding.

So then the king thanked him, and said that it would give him great pleasure, and then he rode on.

The wedding-day came, and the guests came, and the king came too.

Esben was there, but as yet no bride had appeared. People began to whisper that things were not quite right, that Esben's bride had come to him in a dream, and vanished with the dream.

About sunset Esben went and stood in front of the castle, and gazed up into the air.

"Oho!" said the folks, "she is to come that road, is she? Then she is neither more nor less than one of the crazy fancies Esben's head is always full of."

But Esben remained quite undisturbed; he had seen the swans coming flying through the air, and now he knew that she was near at hand.

Directly afterward there came rolling up to the castle gates a magnificent golden chariot, drawn by six white horses.

Esben sprang to the carriage door, and there sat the bride, radiantly beautiful. But the first thing she said was:

"Is the king come?" and Esben was obliged to say, "Yes; but he invited himself, we did not ask him."

"That makes no difference," she said. "If I were to become a bride here to-day, the king would have to be the bridegroom, and it would cost you your life, which would make me most unhappy, for I wish to marry you, and no one else. And now you will have to come to me, if you can, and that before the year is out, or it will be too late. I live ten thousand miles from here, in a castle south of the sun, west of the moon, and in the center of the earth."

When she had thus spoken, she drove off at a tremendous pace, and directly afterward Esben saw a flock of swans rise up in the air and disappear among the clouds.

So he took his staff in his hand, left everything, and set off on his wanderings through the wide, wide world to seek and find his bride. He made straight for the south, and he wandered for days and for weeks, and wherever he came he asked people if they knew the castle, but there was no one who had ever even heard the name.

So at last, one day, out in a wood, he came upon two terribly grim-looking fellows fighting. Esben stopped and asked them what they were fighting about. They told him they were fighting for an old hat that was lying close by; their father was dead, and now they wanted to divide their inheritance, but the hat they could not divide.

"The hat is not worth much," said Esben.

But the dwarfs said this hat was not like other hats, for it possessed this peculiarity: whoever put it on became invisible, and so they both wanted to have it.

And then they fell to again, and fought and struggled.

"Well, fight away till you are friends again," said Esben, as he snatched up the hat, put it on his head, and went his way.

When he had gone some little distance he came upon two other dwarfs, who were fighting savagely. They also wanted to divide their father's property, which consisted solely in a

pair of boots, but whoever put them on went a hundred miles with each step, so both brothers wanted them.

Esben began a conversation with them, and when he had learned the state of affairs he advised them to run a race for the boots.

"Now, I will throw a stone," said he, "and you must run after it, and whoever gets there first, shall have the boots."

This they agreed to, so Esben threw the stone, and they set off running.

Meanwhile Esben had put on the boots, and the first step carried him a hundred miles away.

Once again he came upon two dwarfs quarreling over their inheritance, which could not be divided, and which both wanted to have. This was a rusty old clasp-knife, but it possessed this virtue, they said: If you opened it, and just pointed at any one with it, they fell down dead; and then if you shut it up again, and touched them with it, they became alive again directly.

"Let me look at the knife," said Esben; "I shall be able to advise you, for I have settled such quarrels before."

When he had got it, he wanted to prove it, so he opened it, and pointed it at the two dwarfs, who immediately fell down dead.

"That's right," said Esben; so he shut up the knife and touched them with it, and they jumped up again directly.

Esben put the knife in his pocket, said good-by, put his hat on his head, and in another second was a hundred miles away.

He went on and on till evening, when he came to a little house that stood in the middle of a thick wood. A very old woman lived there; so old that she was all overgrown with moss.

Esben greeted her politely, and asked if she could tell him where the castle was that stood south of the sun, west of the moon, and in the center of the earth.

"No," she said; "she had never heard of such a castle. But she ruled over all the beasts of the field, and she could call them together, and ask if any one of them knew." So she blew

her whistle, and wild beasts came gathering round them from all sides. They came running at full speed, all except the fox; he came sneaking behind in a very bad temper, for he was just going to catch a goose when he heard the whistle, and was obliged to come away and leave it. But neither the fox nor any one of the animals knew anything about the castle.

"Well, then, you must go to my sister," said the old woman; "she rules over all the birds of the air. If she cannot help you, no one can. She lives three hundred miles south of this, on the top of a high mountain. You cannot miss your way."

So Esben set off again, and soon came to the bird mountain.

The old woman who lived there had never heard of the castle south of the sun, west of the moon, and in the center of the earth; but she whistled with her pipe, and all the birds came flocking from all four corners of the earth. She asked them if they knew the castle, but there was not one of them who had ever been so far.

"Ah! but the old eagle is not here," she said, and whistled again.

At last the old eagle came sailing heavily along, his wings whirring and whizzing, and alighted on the top of a tree.

"Where do you come from?" said the old woman. "You come too late; your life must pay the forfeit."

"I come from the castle south of the sun, west of the moon, and in the center of the earth," said the eagle. "I have a nest and young ones there, and I was obliged to see after them a little before I could leave them and fly so far away."

The old woman answered that his life should be spared if he would conduct Esben to the castle.

The eagle thought he could manage that, if he were allowed to stop and rest the night.

Next morning Esben got up on to the eagle's back, and the eagle flew away with him—high, high up in the air, and far away over the stormy ocean.

When they had gone a long, long way, the eagle said:

"Do you see anything out yonder?"

"I see something like a high, black wall close upon us!"

"Ah! that is the earth; we have to go through that. Hold fast; for if you were to get killed, my life would have to pay the forfeit."

So they flew straight into the pitch-dark cave. Esben held fast, and almost directly afterward he saw daylight again.

When they had gone a little farther, the eagle said again:

"Do you see anything out yonder?"

"I see something like a great glass mountain," said Esben.

"That is water," said the eagle; "we have to go through that. Hold fast; for if you were to get killed, my life would have to pay the forfeit."

So they plunged right into the water, and came safely through. Then they flew some distance through the air, and the eagle said again:

"Do you see anything out yonder?"

"I see only flames of fire," said Esben.

"We have to go through that," said the eagle. "Creep well under my feathers, and hold fast; for if you should get killed, my life would have to pay the forfeit."

So they flew straight into the fire, but they passed safely through. Then the eagle sank slowly down, and alighted on the land.

"Now," said he, "I must rest awhile; but we have five hundred miles farther to go."

"Ah! now I can carry you," said Esben; so he took the eagle on his back, and with five strides they were there.

"Now we have come too far," said the eagle. "Can you step ten miles backward?"

"No, I can't do that," said Esben.

"Then we must fly those ten miles," said the eagle.

So they arrived safe and sound at the castle south of the sun, west of the moon, and in the center of the earth. That *was* a castle, the like of which was not to be found in all the world. It shone from top to bottom like pure gold.

When Esben came to the castle gate, he sat down, and presently a serving-maid passed him on her way into the castle. He called to her:

"Greet Maid Lena, and beg her for a goblet of wine for a weary wayfarer."

The girl brought the message to the princess, who ordered her own golden goblet to be filled with wine, and sent the girl out with it.

When Esben had drunk the wine, he threw his ring into the goblet—the ring she had given him the day they first met. The princess recognized the ring directly, so she ran down and embraced Esben, and led him into the castle.

"Now I have got you, I must let you go again directly," she said; "and you must journey all the long way back in my swan-garb, for if the witch who has enchanted us should catch sight of you, she would change you into stone with a single glance."

"There is a remedy for that," said Esben; "only take me to her."

So Esben put on his invisible hat, took his knife in his hand, went up to the old witch, and just pointed at her, and she fell down dead. So he had her buried forty fathoms underground, and then he married his princess, and he is married to her still.

# *Rajeb's Reward*

RAJEB was a youth of Cairo, who had inherited from his father a fortune of about two thousand piasters. Had he invested his little capital in trade, and had he been industrious, he might have done very well; but shortly after his father's death he must needs fall in love with a beautiful girl, and then he could think of nothing else. He had met the maiden accidentally at the fountain of a mosque, and she had drawn aside her veil for a moment in order to drink. She was plainly dressed, and appeared to belong to some humble but respectable family. As soon as she became aware of the young man's admiring gaze she replaced her veil with modest haste, and hurried away, not once looking backward over her shoulder, which showed that she was no coquette. Rajeb followed her and saw her enter a small house, of the kind occupied by middle-class folk. He had fallen in love at first sight, and lost no time in making inquiries concerning his enchantress. He could learn no more of her, however, than the fact that she was as good as she was beautiful.

He then called upon her parents, and boldly asked them to give him their daughter in marriage. They seemed not averse to the match, but when the subject of her dowry was discussed, he was astounded to hear that they demanded of their daughter's husband no less than five thousand piasters. In vain the disconcerted lover protested that such a sum was beyond his means; he was told that he must either pay the money or lose the girl. As the latter alternative was intolerable, he begged that they would allow him a few days' delay. This request was granted, but if, said the parents, he did not appear within the appointed time, they should consider themselves at liberty to accept other proposals.

Rajeb, as he returned to his home, reproached himself for having idled away his past time. "Ah!" he said to himself, "if only I had worked hard, I might now have been rich enough to purchase my happiness!" He took out his money and counted it again and again, but no amount of counting or of wishing would make it more than two thousand piasters. He went to bed, but could not sleep for thinking of possible and impossible ways and means of procuring the rest of the money. At last a plan that seemed feasible presented itself to his mind. There lived at Tantah an old uncle, whom he had not seen for eighteen years, and who was said to be rich. "I will look him up," thought Rajeb, "and beg of him to lend me the three thousand piasters; surely he will not refuse!" And he longed for the day, that he might set out upon this hopeful quest.

Morning dawned at length, and Rajeb started on his journey. In order both to *be* and to *appear* economical, he walked all the way. Just as he reached the first houses of Tantah, he met some boys, of whom he inquired for his uncle, "the rich Jousoff." "The rich Jousoff!" echoed they, in derision. "Say, rather, 'the beggarly old miser Jousoff,' who hates to fling away a bone after he has picked it clean."

At these words the youth's heart sank within him. However, he asked one of the lads to take him to his uncle's house. There he beheld a withered, ragged, dirty old man, who saluted him roughly with:

"What do you want?"

"Oh, dear uncle!" exclaimed Rajeb, "do you not remember me? I am your sister's son, Rajeb—little Rajeb, whom you used to love. I have come to see you. How are you, dear uncle?"

"Oh, I am quite well," said the old man; "quite well, but very poor. I shall be unable to offer you very splendid hospitality."

"What of that?" returned Rajeb cheerfully. "Both riches and poverty come from Heaven."

Thus conversing, they entered Jousoff's room, which was exceedingly dark and dingy, and contained no furniture but an

old mat and a jar of water. Neither pipes nor coffee were to be seen. Rajeb, however, was good-humored and apparently contented. The two supped that evening upon a morsel of detestable cheese and some crusts of coarse black bread. The cheese was an unusual luxury, procured especially for the occasion, and the neighbors who saw the old man go out and buy it could scarcely believe their eyes.

Rajeb was not accustomed to rich fare, but after his toilsome journey he really stood in need of a good substantial supper. When the meager meal was ended, he tried to guide the conversation into a channel suitable for the introduction of his request. The old man quickly understood his hints. Anticipating his purpose, he cried: "I am a beggar! No dervish is poorer than I! All the world robs me. I have spent my last para upon a supper for you. I am ruined!" By glowing descriptions of the girl's beauty and his own passion of love for her, Rajeb strove in vain to soften the miser's heart. Finding that he could make no impression upon that stony organ, he rose at length, and, muttering something about needing a breath of fresh air, went out to conceal his intense disappointment and chagrin.

Outside the house, a lean ass was lying in a small shed munching some miserable scraps of straw. Rajeb, who loved animals, pitied the poor, starved creature; and, after caressing him, went to a shop and bought some barley, which he gave him, together with a drink of water. After that, he returned to his uncle's house, in which he spent a most uncomfortable night, lying upon the floor. In the morning, after another wretched repast, the nephew was about to take his leave when Jousoff remarked: "I have an ass which is of no use to me. It is all the property left to me, and if you like you may—accompany me to the market and see me sell it." Rajeb agreed to the proposal, and they went together to the ass's stall. The young man bestowed another caress upon the poor animal, which looked at him with strangely meaningful eyes, and struck the ground with his foot several times. He seemed to Rajeb to say, "Buy me."

All the way to the market our hero was debating within himself as to whether or not he should buy the ass, in answer to his mute appeal. Something—he knew not what, unless it were a feeling of compassion—strongly impelled him to do so. When the little party had reached their destination, several would-be purchasers presented themselves, for the animal was young, and had no other fault than the skinniness produced by starvation. One said he would give two hundred piasters, another offered three hundred, another five hundred. Rajeb, perceiving that his uncle was willing to take the last-named sum, offered a few piasters more, making sure that he should now get the ass.

"What on earth do *you* want with the beast?" inquired his avaricious relative.

"I am resolved to possess it," replied Rajeb.

"Well, then," said the old man, with a greedy look, "give me a thousand piasters, and it shall be yours."

And as by this time the youth felt that at any cost (although he knew not why) he *must* have the ass, he agreed at length even to this exorbitant demand and the bargain was concluded.

As nearly all Rajeb's money was at Cairo, he invited his uncle to accompany him thither, in order to get his piasters. Since he had changed masters, the ass seemed a different creature, and fairly danced to the city. There Rajeb duly handed over to his uncle the stipulated sum, and entertained him very hospitably for a few days, after which Jousoff said farewell, and departed to his own home. His nephew at once set to work making a stall for his new possession, which enjoyed now an abundance of food and careful tending. Meanwhile, the poor old miser, homeward-bound, had been attacked, plundered, and slain by highway robbers. When the news reached the ears of kind-hearted Rajeb, he shed a tear over his uncle's sad fate, and set off again for Tantah. He was next of kin to the dead man, but, with the remembrance of his recent visit fresh in his mind, he did not expect to reap much benefit from his heirship, notwithstanding the reputation for wealth which Jousoff had acquired.

This time, Rajeb rode upon his ass. After putting up his

steed in his old stall, he proceeded to search the house. In that miserable hovel, not a para, not a single thing of any value, was to be found. All the time that Rajeb was examining the premises, the ass whined and brayed. Thinking he needed food and drink, his master went out several times, and fetched him straw, water, and barley; but they lay untouched, and the animal continually stamped with his foot upon the floor of the stall.

An idea occurred to Rajeb. "Why do you do that?" said he, whereupon the ass stamped still more vigorously than before. His master, seizing a rusty iron bar which lay near, began to turn up the ground, the ass looking on with evident pleasure and satisfaction, his wonderfully expressive eyes seeming to say: "That is right! Go on; it is there." And presently Rajeb discovered a coffer! When he opened it, he found, to his unspeakable delight, that it was filled with doubloons, sequins, and precious coins of every sort. Still the ass would not allow him to rest. Again—this time in another spot—he beat the ground with his foot. Rajeb eagerly obeyed, and his digging soon brought to light another coffer, full of rubies, pearls, emeralds, and other magnificent gems. The ass appeared now perfectly satisfied, and stamped no more.

Upon the back of the willing beast, the treasure—a heavy load—was quickly carried to Cairo. Rajeb hastened to his lady's house, and was just in time to prevent her marriage with an old Turk who had agreed to give the five thousand piasters demanded by her parents. Rajeb had only to exhibit to the father a very small part of his acquisition in order to induce him to break off the projected match, and bestow his daughter upon such a highly desirable husband as the once rejected suitor had now become.

The wedding took place immediately, and Rajeb and his wife lived most happily together for many years. The ass which had brought such good fortune was treated always as a dear friend, and the only task imposed upon him was that of sometimes carrying his mistress and her children. Every one loved and petted him, and he lived in clover until the end of his days.

# *Alphege; or, The Green Monkey*

MANY years ago there lived a king who was twice married. His first wife, a good and beautiful woman, died at the birth of her little son, and the king her husband was so overwhelmed with grief at her loss that his only comfort was in the sight of his heir.

When the time for the young prince's christening came the king chose as godmother a neighboring princess, so celebrated for her wisdom and goodness that she was commonly called "the good queen." She named the baby Alphege and from that moment took him to her heart.

Time wipes away the greatest griefs, and after two or three years the king married again. His second wife was a princess of undeniable beauty, but by no means of so amiable a disposition as the first queen. In due time a second prince was born, and the queen was devoured with rage at the thought that Prince Alphege came between her son and the throne. She took care, however, to conceal her jealous feelings from the king.

At length she could control herself no longer, so she sent a trusty servant to her old and faithful friend the fairy of the mountain, to beg her to devise some means by which she might get rid of her stepson.

The fairy replied that much as she desired to be agreeable to the queen in every way, it was impossible for her to attempt anything against the young prince, who was under the protection of some greater power than her own.

The "good queen" on her side watched carefully over her godson. She was obliged to do so from a distance, her own country being a remote one, but she was well informed of all

that went on and knew all about the queen's wicked designs. She therefore sent the prince a large and splendid ruby, with injunctions to wear it night and day, as it would protect him from all attacks, but added that the talisman only retained its power as long as the prince remained within his father's dominions. The wicked queen knowing this made every attempt to get the prince out of the country, but her efforts failed, till one day accident did what she was unable to accomplish.

The king had an only sister who was deeply attached to him and who was married to the sovereign of a distant country. She had always kept up a close correspondence with her brother, and the accounts she heard of Prince Alphege made her long to become acquainted with so charming a nephew. She entreated the king to allow the prince to visit her, and after some hesitation, which was overruled by his wife, he finally consented.

Prince Alphege was at this time fourteen years old and the handsomest and most engaging youth imaginable. In his infancy he had been placed in the charge of one of the great ladies of the court, who, according to the prevailing custom, acted first as his head nurse and then as his governess. When he outgrew her care her husband was appointed as his tutor and governor, so that he had never been separated from this excellent couple, who loved him as tenderly as they did their only daughter Zayda, and were warmly loved by him in return.

When the prince set forth on his travels it was but natural that this devoted couple should accompany him, and accordingly he started with them, attended by a numerous retinue.

For some time he traveled through his father's dominions and all went well; but soon after passing the frontier they had to cross a desert plain under a burning sun. They were glad to take shelter under the first group of trees, and here the prince complained of burning thirst. Luckily a tiny stream ran close by and some water was soon procured; but no sooner had he tasted it than he sprang from his carriage and disappeared in a

moment. In vain did his anxious followers seek for him—he was nowhere to be found.

As they were hunting and shouting through the trees a great black monkey suddenly appeared on a point of rock and cried: "Poor sorrowing people, you are seeking your prince in vain. Return to your own country and know that he will not be restored to you till you have for some time failed to recognize him."

With these words he vanished, leaving the courtiers sadly perplexed; but as all their efforts to find the prince were useless they had no choice but to go home, bringing with them the sad news, which so greatly distressed the king that he fell ill and died not long after.

The queen, whose ambition was boundless, was delighted to see the crown on her son's head and to have the power in her own hands. Her hard rule made her very unpopular, and it was commonly believed that she had made away with Prince Alphege. Indeed, had the king, her son, not been deservedly beloved a revolution would certainly have arisen.

Meantime the former governess of the unfortunate Alphege, who had lost her husband soon after the king's death, retired to her own house with her daughter, who grew up a lovely and most lovable girl, and both continued to mourn the loss of their dear prince.

The young king was devoted to hunting and often indulged in his favorite pastime, attended by the noblest youths in his kingdom. One day, after a long morning's chase, he stopped to rest near a brook in the shade of a little wood, where a splendid tent had been prepared for him. While at luncheon he suddenly spied a little monkey of the brightest green sitting on a tree and gazing so tenderly at him that he felt quite moved. He forbade his courtiers to frighten the animal, and the monkey, noticing how much attention was being paid him, sprang from bough to bough and at length gradually approached the king, who offered him some food. The monkey took it very daintily and finally came to the table. The king took him on his knees and, delighted with his capture, brought

the creature home with him. He would trust no one else with his care, and the whole court soon talked of nothing but the pretty green monkey.

One morning, as Prince Alphege's governess and her daughter were alone together, the little monkey sprang in through an open window. He had escaped from the palace, and his manners were so gentle and caressing that Zayda and her mother soon got over the first fright he had given them. He had spent some time with them and quite won their hearts by his insinuating ways, when the king discovered where he was and sent to fetch him back. But the monkey made such piteous cries, and seemed so unhappy when any one attempted to catch him, that the two ladies begged the king to leave him a little longer with them, to which he consented.

One evening, as they sat by the fountain in the garden, the little monkey kept gazing at Zayda with such sad and loving eyes that she and her mother could not think what to make of it, and they were still more surprised when they saw big tears rolling down his cheeks.

Next day both mother and daughter were sitting in a jasmine bower in the garden, and they began to talk of the green monkey and his strange ways. The mother said: "My dear child, I can no longer hide my feelings from you. I cannot get the thought out of my mind that the green monkey is no other than our beloved Prince Alphege, transformed in this strange fashion. I know the idea sounds wild, but I cannot get it out of my heart, and it leaves me no peace."

As she spoke she glanced up, and there sat the little monkey, whose tears and gestures seemed to confirm her words.

The following night the elder lady dreamed that she saw the good queen, who said: "Do not weep any longer, but follow my directions. Go into your garden and lift up the little marble slab at the foot of the great myrtle-tree. You will find beneath it a crystal vase filled with a bright green liquid. Take it with you and place the thing which is at present most in your thoughts into a bath filled with roses and rub it well with the green liquid."

At these words the sleeper awoke, and lost no time in rising and hurrying to the garden, where she found all as the good queen had described. Then she hastened to rouse her daughter and together they prepared the bath, for they would not let their women know what they were about. Zayda gathered quantities of roses, and when all was ready they put the monkey into a large jasper bath, where the mother rubbed him all over with the green liquid.

Their suspense was not long, for suddenly the monkey skin dropped off, and there stood Prince Alphege, the handsomest and most charming of men. The joy of such a meeting was beyond words. After a time the ladies begged the prince to relate his adventures, and he told them of all his sufferings in the desert when he was first transformed. His only comfort had been in visits from the good queen, who had at length put him in the way of meeting his brother.

Several days were spent in these interesting conversations, but at length Zayda's mother began to think of the best means for placing the prince on the throne, which was his by right.

The queen on her side was feeling very anxious. She had felt sure from the first that her son's pet monkey was no other than Prince Alphege, and she longed to put an end to him. Her suspicions were confirmed by the fairy of the mountain, and she hastened in tears to the king, her son.

"I am informed," she cried, "that some ill-disposed people have raised up an impostor in the hopes of dethroning you. You must at once have him put to death!"

The king, who was very brave, assured the queen that he would soon punish the conspirators. He made careful inquiries into the matter, and thought it hardly probable that a quiet widow and a young girl would think of attempting anything of the nature of a revolution.

He determined to go and see them and to find out the truth for himself; so one night, without saying anything to the queen or his ministers, he set out for the palace where the two ladies lived, attended only by a small band of followers.

The two ladies were at the moment deep in conversation

with Prince Alphege, and hearing a knocking so late at night begged him to keep out of sight for a time. What was their surprise when the door was opened to see the king and his suite!

"I know," said the king, "that you are plotting against my crown and person, and I have come to have an explanation with you."

As she was about to answer, Prince Alphege, who had heard all, came forward and said: "It is from me you must ask an explanation, brother," and he spoke with such grace and dignity that every one gazed at him with mute surprise.

At length the king, recovering from his astonishment at recognizing the brother who had been lost some years before, exclaimed: "Yes, you are indeed my brother, and now that I have found you, take the throne to which I have no longer a right." So saying, he respectfully kissed the prince's hand.

Alphege threw himself into his arms, and the brothers hastened to the royal palace, where in the presence of the entire court he received the crown from his brother's hand. To clear away any possible doubt, he showed the ruby which the good queen had given him in his childhood. As they were gazing at the jewel it suddenly split with a loud noise, and at the same moment the wicked queen expired.

King Alphege lost no time in marrying his dear and lovely Zayda, and his joy was complete when the good queen appeared at his wedding. She assured him that the fairy of the mountain had henceforth lost all power over him, and after spending some time with the young couple and bestowing the most costly presents on them, she retired to her own country.

King Alphege insisted on his brother sharing his throne, and they all lived to a good old age, universally beloved and admired.

# *The Benevolent Frog*

THERE was once a king who for many years had been engaged in a war with his neighbors; a great number of battles had been fought, and at last the enemy laid siege to his capital. The king, fearing for the safety of the queen, begged her to retire to a fortified castle, which he himself had never visited but once. The queen endeavored, with many prayers and tears, to persuade him to allow her to remain beside him and to share his fate, and it was with loud cries of grief that she was put into her chariot by the king to be driven away. He ordered his guards, however, to accompany her, and promised to steal away when possible to visit her. He tried to comfort her with this hope, although he knew that there was little chance of fulfilling it, for the castle stood a long distance off, surrounded by a thick forest, and only those who were well acquainted with the roads could possibly find their way to it.

The queen parted from her husband, broken-hearted at leaving him exposed to the dangers of war; she traveled by easy stages, in case the fatigue of so long a journey should make her ill; at last she reached the castle, feeling low-spirited and distressed. When sufficiently rested, she walked about the surrounding country, but found nothing to interest her or divert her thoughts. She saw only far-spreading desert tracts on either side, which gave her more pain than pleasure to look upon; sadly she gazed around her, exclaiming at intervals: "What a contrast between this place and that in which I have lived all my life! If I stay here long I shall die! With whom can I talk in these solitudes? With whom can I share my troubles? What have I done to the king that he should banish

me? He wishes me, it seems, to feel the full bitterness of our separation, by exiling me to this miserable castle."

Thus she lamented; and although the king wrote daily to her, and sent her good news of the progress of the siege, she grew more and more unhappy, and at last determined that she would return to him. Knowing, however, that the officers who were in attendance upon her had received orders not to take her back, unless the king sent a special messenger, she kept her design secret, but ordered a small chariot to be built for her, in which there was only room for one, saying that she should like sometimes to accompany the hunt. She drove herself, and followed so closely on the hounds, that the huntsmen were left behind; by this means she had sole command of her chariot, and could get away whenever she liked. Her only difficulty was her ignorance of the roads that traversed the forest; but she trusted to the kindness of Providence to bring her safely through it. She gave word that there was to be a great hunt, and that she wished everybody to be there; she herself would go in her chariot, and each was to follow a different route, that there might be no possibility of escape for the wild beasts. Everything was done according to her orders. The young queen, feeling sure that she should soon see her husband again, dressed herself as becomingly as possible; her hat was covered with feathers of different colors, the front of her dress lavishly trimmed with precious stones, and her beauty, which was of no ordinary kind, made her seem, when so adorned, a second Diana.

While everybody was occupied with the pleasures of the hunt, she gave rein to her horses, encouraged them with voice and whip, and soon their quickened pace became a gallop; then, taking the bit between their teeth, they flew along at such a speed that the chariot seemed borne by the winds, and the eye could scarcely follow it. Too late the poor queen repented of her rashness. "What could I have been thinking of?" she said. "How could I have imagined that I should be able to control such wild and fiery horses? Alas! what will become of me? What would the king do if he knew the great danger I am in.

he who loves me so dearly, and who only sent me away that I might be in greater safety? This is my gratitude for his tender care!" The air resounded with her piteous lamentations; she invoked Heaven, she called the fairies to her assistance, but it seemed that all the powers had abandoned her. The chariot was overthrown; she had not sufficient strength to jump quickly enough to the ground, and her foot was caught between the wheel and the axletree; it was only by a miracle she was saved.

She remained stretched on the ground at the foot of a tree; her heart scarcely beat, she could not speak, and her face was covered with blood. She lay thus for a long time; when at last she opened her eyes, she saw, standing near her, a woman of gigantic stature, clothed only in a lion's skin, with bare arms and legs, her hair tied up with the dried skin of a snake, the head of which dangled over her shoulders; in her hand was a club made of stone, which served her as a walking-stick, and a quiver full of arrows was fastened to her side. When the queen caught sight of this extraordinary figure she felt sure that she was dead, for she did not think it was possible that she could be alive after such a terrible accident, and she said in a low voice to herself: "I am not surprised that it is so difficult to resolve to die, since what is to be seen in the other world is so frightful." The giantess, who overheard her words, could not help laughing at the queen's idea that she was dead. "Take courage," she said to her, "for know that you are still among the living; but your fate is none the less sad. I am the fairy lioness, whose dwelling is near here; you must come and live with me." The queen looked sorrowfully at her, and said: "If you will be good enough, Madam Lioness, to take me back to my castle, and tell the king what ransom you demand, he loves me so dearly that he will not refuse you even the half of his kingdom." "No," replied the giantess, "I am rich enough, but for some time past my lonely life has seemed dull to me; you are intelligent, and will be able perhaps to amuse me." As she finished speaking, she took the form of a lioness, and placing the queen on her back, she carried her to the depths of

her cave, and there rubbed her with a spirit which quickly healed the queen's wounds. But what surprise and misery for the queen to find herself in this dreadful abode! It could only be reached by ten thousand steps, which led down to the center of the earth; there was no light but that shed by a number of tall lamps—which were reflected in a lake of quicksilver. This lake was covered with monsters, each hideous enough to have frightened a less timid queen; there were owls, screech-owls, ravens, and other birds of ill omen, filling the air with discordant sounds; in the distance could be seen rising a mountain whence flowed the sluggish waters of a stream composed of all the tears shed by unhappy lovers, from the reservoirs of their sad loves. The trees were bare of leaves and fruit, the ground covered with marigolds, briers, and nettles.

The food corresponded to the climate of this miserable country; for a few dried roots, some horse-chestnuts, and thorn-apples were all that was provided by the fairy lioness to appease the hunger of those who fell into her hands.

As soon as the queen was well enough to begin work, the fairy told her she could build herself a hut, as she was going to remain with her for the rest of her life. On hearing this, the queen could no longer restrain her tears. "Alas, what have I done to you," she cried, "that you should keep me here? If my death, which I feel is near, would give you pleasure, I pray you, kill me, it is all the kindness I dare hope from you; but do not condemn me to pass a long and melancholy life apart from my husband."

The lioness only scoffed at her, and told her that the best thing she could do was to dry her tears and try to please her; that if she acted otherwise, she would be the most miserable person in the world.

"What must I do then," replied the queen, "to soften your heart?" "I am fond of fly pasties," said the lioness. "You must find means of procuring a sufficient number of flies to make me a large and sweet-tasting one." "But," said the queen, "I see no flies here, and even were there any, it is not light enough to catch them; and if I were to catch some, I have

never in my life made pastry, so that you are giving me orders which it is impossible for me to execute." "No matter," said the pitiless lioness; "that which I wish to have, I will have."

The queen made no reply; she thought to herself, in spite of the cruel fairy, that she had but one life to lose, and in the condition in which she then was, what was there to fear in death? Instead, therefore, of going in search of flies, she sat herself down under a yew-tree, and began to weep and complain: "Ah, my dear husband, what grief will be yours when you go to the castle to fetch me and find I am not there; you will think that I am dead or faithless, and I would rather that you should mourn the loss of my life than that of my love; perhaps some one will find the remains of my chariot in the forest, and all the ornaments which I took with me to please you; and when you see these, you will no longer doubt that death has taken me; and how can I tell that you will not give to another the heart's love which you have shared with me? But, at least, I shall not have the pain of knowing this, since I am not to return to the world." She would have continued communing thus with herself for a long time, if she had not been interrupted by the dismal croaking of a bird above her head. She lifted her eyes, and by the feeble light saw a large raven with a frog in its bill, and about to swallow it. "Although I see no help at hand for myself," she said, "I will not let this poor frog perish if I can save it; it suffers as much in its way as I do in mine, although our conditions are so different," and picking up the first stick she could find, she made the raven drop its prey. The frog fell to the ground, where it lay for a time half stunned, but finally recovering its froggish senses, it began to speak, and said: "Beautiful queen, you are the first benevolent person that I have seen since my curiosity first brought me here." "By what wonderful power are you enabled to speak, little frog?" responded the queen, "and what kind of people do you see here? for as yet I have seen none." "All the monsters that cover the lake," replied the little frog, "were once in the world: some on thrones, some in high positions at court; there are even here some royal ladies who

caused much strife and bloodshed; it is they whom you see changed into leeches; their fate condemns them to be here for a time, but none of those who come return to the world better or wiser." "I can well understand," said the queen, "that many wicked people together do not help to make one another better; but you, my little frog friend, what are you doing here?" "It was curiosity which led me here," she replied. "I am half a fairy, my powers are restricted with regard to certain things, but far-reaching in others; if the fairy lioness knew that I was in her dominions, she would kill me."

"Whether fairy or half-fairy," said the queen, "I cannot understand how you could have fallen into the raven's clutches and been nearly eaten." "I can explain it in a few words," replied the frog. "When I have my little cap of roses on my head, I fear nothing, as in that resides most of my power; unfortunately, I had left it in the marsh, when that ugly raven pounced upon me; if it had not been for you, madam, I should be no more; and as you have saved my life, you have only to command, and I will do all in my power to alleviate the sorrows of your own." "Alas! dear frog," said the queen, "the wicked fairy who holds me captive wishes me to make her a fly-pasty; but there are no flies here; if there were any, I could not see in the dim light to catch them; I run a chance, therefore, of being killed by her blows."

"Leave it to me," said the frog. "I will soon get you some." Whereupon the frog rubbed herself over with sugar, and more than six thousand of her frog friends did likewise; then they repaired to a place where the fairy kept a large store of flies, for the purpose of tormenting some of her unhappy victims. As soon as they smelled the sugar, they flew to it, and stuck to the frogs, and these kind helpers returned at a gallop to the queen. There had never been such a fly-catching before, nor a better pasty, than that the queen made for the fairy. The latter was greatly surprised when the queen handed it to her, and could not imagine how she had been clever enough to catch the flies.

The queen, finding herself exposed to the inclemencies of the

poisonous atmosphere, cut down some cypress branches, wherewith to build herself a hut. The frog generously offered her services, and putting herself at the head of all those who had gone to collect the flies, they helped the queen to build as pretty a little tenement as the world could show. Scarcely, however, had she laid herself down to rest than the monsters of the lake, jealous of her repose, came round her hut, and nearly drove her distracted, by setting up a noise, more hideous than any ever heard before.

She rose in fear and trembling and fled from the house: this was exactly what the monsters desired. A dragon, who had formerly been a tyrant of one of the finest states of the universe, immediately took possession of it.

The poor queen tried to complain of the ill-treatment, but no one would listen to her; the monsters laughed and hooted at her, and the fairy lioness told her that if she came again to deafen her with lamentations, she would give her a sound thrashing. She was forced, therefore, to hold her tongue, and to have recourse to the frog, who was the kindest body in the world. They wept together; for as soon as she put on her cap of roses, the frog was able to laugh or weep like any one else. "I feel such an affection for you," she said to the queen, "that I will rebuild your house, even though I drive all the monsters of the lake to despair." She immediately cut some wood, and the little rustic palace of the queen was so quickly reared, that she was able to sleep in it that night. The frog, who thought of everything that was necessary for the queen's comfort, made her a bed of wild thyme. When the wicked fairy found out that the queen did not sleep on the ground, she sent for her. "What gods or men are they who protect you?" she asked. "This land, watered only by showers of burning sulphur, has never produced even a leaf of sage; I am told, nevertheless, that sweet-smelling herbs spring up beneath your feet!"

"I cannot explain it, madam," said the queen, "unless the cause is due to the child I hope one day to have, who will perhaps be less unhappy than I am."

"What I now wish for," said the fairy, "is a bunch of the

rarest flowers; see if this coming happiness you speak of will obtain these for you. If you fail to get them, blows will not fail to follow, for these I often give, and know well how to administer." The queen began to cry; such threats as these were anything but pleasant to her and she was in despair at the thought of the impossibility of finding flowers.

She went back to her little house; her friend the frog came to her. "How unhappy you are!" she said to the queen. "Alas! who would not be so, dear friend? The fairy has ordered a bunch of the most beautiful flowers, and where am I to find them? You see what sort of flowers grow here; my life, nevertheless, is at stake, if I do not procure them for her." "Dear queen," said the frog in tender tones, "we must try our best to get you out of this difficulty. There lives a bat in this neighborhood, the only one with whom I have made acquaintance; she is a good creature, and moves more quickly than I can; I will give her my cap of roses, and aided by this, she will be able to find you the flowers." The queen made a low courtesy; for there was no possible way of embracing the frog. The latter went off without delay to speak to the bat; a few hours later she returned, bearing under her wings the most exquisite flowers. The queen hurried off with them to the fairy, who was more overcome by surprise than before, unable to understand in what miraculous way the queen received help.

Meanwhile the queen was continually thinking by what means she could escape. She confided her longing to the frog, who said to her: "Madam, allow me first to consult my little cap, and we will then arrange matters according to its advice." She took her cap, placed it on some straw, and burned in front of it a few sprigs of juniper, some capers, and two green peas; she then croaked five times, and the ceremony being then completed, she put on her cap again, and began speaking like an oracle. "Fate, the ruler of all things, forbids you to leave this place. You will have a little princess, more beautiful than Venus herself; do not trouble yourself about anything else, time alone can comfort you." The queen's head drooped, a few tears fell from her eyes, but she resolved to trust her friend

"At least," she said to her, "do not leave me here alone; and befriend me when my little one is born." The frog promised to remain with her, and comforted her as best she could.

But it is now time to return to the king. While the enemy kept him shut up in his capital, he could not continually send messengers to the queen. At last, however, after several sorties, he obliged the besiegers to retire, and he rejoiced at his success, less on his own account than on that of the queen, whom he could now bring back in safety. He was in total ignorance of the disaster which had befallen her, for none of his officers had dared to tell him of it. They had been into the forest and found the remains of the chariot, the runaway horses, and the driving apparel which she had put on when going to find her husband. As they were fully persuaded that she was dead, and had been eaten by wild beasts, their only care was to make the king believe that she had died suddenly. On receiving this mournful intelligence, he thought he should die himself of grief; he tore his hair, he wept many tears, and gave vent to his bereavement in every imaginable expression of sorrow, cries, sobs, and sighs. For some days he would see no one, nor allow himself to be seen; he then returned to his capital, and entered on a long period of mourning, to which the sorrow of his heart testified more sincerely than even his somber garments of grief. All the surrounding kings sent their ambassadors charged with messages of condolence; and when the ceremonies, indispensable to these occasions, were over, he granted his subjects a period of peace, exempting them from military service, and helping them, in every possible way, to improve their commerce.

The queen knew nothing of all this. Meanwhile a little princess had been born to her, as beautiful as the frog had predicted, to whom they gave the name of Moufette. The queen had great difficulty in persuading the fairy to allow her to bring up the child, for so ferocious was she, that she would have liked to eat it. Moufette, a wonder of beauty, was now six months old and the queen, as she looked upon her with a tenderness mingled with pity, continually said: "Ah! if your father could

see you, my poor little one, how delighted he would be! how dear you would be to him! But even, already, perhaps, he has begun to forget me; he believes, no doubt, that we are lost to him in death; and perhaps another fills the place in his heart that once was mine."

These sorrowful reflections caused her many tears; the frog, who truly loved her, seeing her weep like this, said to her one day: "If you would like me to do so, madam, I will go and find the king, your husband; the journey is long, and I travel but slowly; but, sooner or later, I shall hope to arrive." This proposal could not have been more warmly received than it was; the queen clasped her hands, and made Moufette clasp hers too, in sign of the gratitude she felt toward Madam Frog, for offering to undertake the journey. She assured her that the king also would not be ungrateful; "but," she continued, "of what use will it be to him to know that I am in this melancholy abode; it will be impossible for him to deliver me from it?" "Madam," replied the frog, "we must leave that to Heaven; we can only do that which depends on ourselves."

They said good-by to each other; the queen sent a message to the king, written with her blood on a piece of rag; for she possessed neither ink nor paper. She begged him to give attention to everything the good frog told him, and to believe all she said, as she was bringing him news of his consort.

The frog was a year and four days climbing up the ten thousand steps which lead from the dark country, in which she had left the queen, up into the world; it took her another year to prepare her equipage, for she had too much pride to allow herself to appear at the court like a poor, common frog from the marshes. She had a little sedan-chair made, large enough to hold two eggs comfortably; it was covered on the outside with tortoise-shell, and lined with lizard-skin; then she chose fifty maids of honor; these were the little green frogs which hop about the meadows; each was mounted on a snail, furnished with a light saddle, and rode in style with the leg thrown over the saddle-bow; several water-rats, dressed as pages, ran before the snails, as her bodyguard; in short, nothing so pretty

had ever been seen before, and to crown it all, her cap of crimson roses, always fresh and in full bloom, suited her in the most admirable manner. She was a bit of a coquette in her way, so she felt obliged to add a little rouge and a few patches; some said that she was painted as were many ladies of that country, but inquiries into the matter proved that this report had only been spread by her enemies.

The journey lasted seven years, during which time the poor queen went through unspeakable pains and suffering, and if it had not been for the beautiful Moufette, who was a great comfort to her, she would have died a hundred times over. This wonderful little creature could not open her mouth or say a word, without filling her mother with delight; indeed, everybody, with the exception of the fairy lioness, was enchanted with her.

At last, when the queen had lived six years in this horrible place, the fairy said that, provided everything she killed was given to her, she might go hunting with her. The joy of the queen at once more seeing the sun may be imagined. So unaccustomed had she grown to its light that at first she thought it would blind her. As for Moufette, she was so quick and intelligent that even at five or six years of age she never failed to hit her mark, and so in this way the mother and daughter succeeded in somewhat lessening the ferocity of the fairy.

The frog meanwhile traveled over mountains and valleys, never stopping day or night, and at last drew near the capital, where the king was in residence. She was surprised to see dancing and festivity in every direction; there was laughter and singing, and the nearer she got to the town, the more joyous and jubilant the people seemed. Her rural equipage caused great astonishment; every one went after it, and the crowd soon became so large that she had great difficulty in making her way to the palace. Here everything was as magnificent as possible, for the king, who had been a widower for nine years, had at last yielded to the prayers of his subjects, and was on the eve of marriage with a princess, less beautiful, it is true, than his wife, but not the less agreeable for that.

The kind frog, having descended from her sedan-chair, entered the royal presence, followed by her attendants. She had no need to ask for audience, for the king, his affianced bride, and all the princes were much too curious to know the reason of her coming to think of interrupting her. "Sire," said she, "I hardly know if the news I bring you will give you joy or sorrow; the marriage which you are about to celebrate convinces me of your infidelity to the queen."

"Her memory is dear to me as ever," said the king, unable to prevent the falling of a tear or two; "but you must know, kind frog, that kings are not always able to do what they wish; for the last nine years my subjects have been urging me to marry; I owe them an heir to the throne, and I have therefore chosen this young princess, who appears to me all that is charming." "I advise you not to marry her," said the frog, "for the queen is not dead; I bring you a letter from her, written with her own blood. Know also that a little daughter, Moufette, has been born to you, more beautiful than the heavens themselves." The king took the rag, on which the queen had scrawled a few words; he kissed it, he bathed it in his tears, he showed it to the whole assembly, saying that he recognized his wife's handwriting; he asked the frog a thousand questions, which she answered with vivacity and intelligence.

The betrothed princess and the ambassadors who had come to be present at the marriage, began to pull long faces. One of the most important of the guests turned to the king, and said: "Sire, can you think of breaking so solemn an engagement on the word of a toad like that? This scum of the marshes has the insolence to come and tell lies before the whole court, for the pleasure of being heard!" "Know, your Excellency," replied the frog, "that I am no scum of the marshes, and since I am forced to exhibit my powers: Come forth, fairies all!" And thereupon all the frogs, rats, snails, lizards, with the frog at their head, suddenly appeared; not, however, in the usual form of these reptiles, but with tall, majestic figures, pleasing countenances, and eyes more brilliant than stars; each wore a

jeweled crown on his head, and over his shoulders a regal mantle of velvet, lined with ermine, with a long train which was borne by dwarfs. At the same time was heard the sound of trumpets, kettle-drums, hautboys, and drums, filling the air with melodious and warlike music, and all the fairies began to dance a ballet, their every step so light that the slightest spring lifted them to the vaulted ceiling of the room. The king and his future queen, surprised as they were at this, were no less astonished when they saw all these fairy ballet dancers suddenly change into flowers, jasmine, jonquils, violets, pinks, and tuberoses, which still continued to dance as if they had legs and feet. It was like a living flower-bed, of which every movement delighted both the eye and the sense of smell. Another moment and the flowers had disappeared; in their place several fountains threw their waters into the air letting them fall into an artificial lake at the foot of the castle walls; this was covered with little painted and gilded boats, so pretty and dainty that the princess invited the ambassadors to go for a trip on the water. They were quite pleased to do so, thinking it was all a merry pastime, which would end happily in the marriage festivities. But they had no sooner embarked than the boats, water, and fountains disappeared, and the frogs were frogs again. The king asked what had become of the princess; the frog replied: "Sire, no queen is yours but your wife; were I less attached to her than I am, I should not interfere; but she is so deserving, and your daughter Moufette is so charming, that you ought not to delay a moment in going to their deliverance." "I assure you, Madam Frog," said the king, "that if I did not believe my wife to be dead, there is nothing in the world I would not do to see her again." "After the wonders I have shown you," she replied, "it seems to me that you ought to be more convinced of the truth of what I have told you. Leave your kingdom in charge of trustworthy men, and start without delay. Here is a ring which will furnish you with the means of seeing the queen, and of speaking with the fairy lioness, although she is the most terrible creature in the world."

The king departed, refusing to allow any one to accompany

him, after making handsome presents to the frog. "Do not be discouraged," she said to him; "you will meet with terrible difficulties, but I hope that you will succeed according to your wishes." Somewhat comforted by her words, the king started in search of his dear wife with no other guide than his ring.

As Moufette grew older her beauty became more perfect, and all the monsters of the quicksilver lake fell in love with her; and the dragons, with their hideous and terrifying forms, came and lay at her feet. Although Moufette had seen them ever since she was born, her beautiful eyes could not accustom themselves to the sight of these creatures, and she would run away and hide in her mother's arms. "Shall we remain here long?" she asked her; "is there to be no end to our misery?" The queen spoke hopefully in order to cheer the child, but in her heart she had no hope; the absence of the frog, her unbroken silence, the long time that had elapsed since she had news of the king, all these things filled her with sorrow and despair.

The fairy lioness had gradually made it a practice to take them with her hunting. She was fond of good things, and liked the game they killed for her, and although all they received in return was the gift of the head or the feet, it was something to be allowed to see again the light of day. The fairy took the form of a lioness, the queen and her daughter seated themselves on her back, and thus they went hunting through the forests.

The king happened to be resting in a forest one day, whither his ring had guided him, and saw them pass like an arrow shot from the bow; he was unseen of them, and when he tried to follow them, they vanished completely from his sight. Notwithstanding the constant trouble she had been in, the queen still preserved her former beauty; she appeared to her husband more charming than ever. He longed for her to return to him, and feeling sure that the young princess who was with her was his dear little Moufette, he determined to face a thousand deaths rather than abandon his design of rescuing her.

By the help of his ring, he found his way into the obscure region where the queen had been so many years; he was not a

little surprised when he found himself descending to the center of the earth, but every fresh thing he saw astonished him more and more. The fairy lioness, who knew everything, was aware of the day and the hour when he would arrive; she would have given a great deal if the powers in league with her had ordained otherwise; but she determined at least to oppose his strength with the full might of her own.

She built a palace of crystal, which floated in the center of the lake of quicksilver, and rose and fell with its waves. In it she imprisoned the queen and her daughter, and then harangued all the monsters who were in love with Moufette. "You will lose this beautiful princess," she said to them, "if you do not help me to protect her from a knight who has come to carry her away." The monsters promised to leave nothing in their power undone; they surrounded the palace of crystal; the lightest in weight took their stations on the roofs and walls; the others kept guard at the doors, and the remainder in the lake.

The king, advised by his faithful ring, went first to the fairy's cave; she was awaiting him in her form of lioness. As soon as he appeared she threw herself upon him; but he handled his sword with a valor for which she was not prepared, and as she was putting out one of her paws to fell him to the earth, he cut it off at the joint just where the elbow comes. She uttered a loud cry and fell over; he went up to her, put his foot on her throat and swore that he would kill her, and in spite of her ungovernable fury and invulnerability she felt a little afraid. "What do you wish to do with me?" she asked. "What do you want of me?" "I wish to punish you," he replied proudly, "for having carried away my wife, and you shall give her up to me or I will strangle you on the spot." "Look toward the lake," she said, "and see if I have the power to do so." The king turned in the direction toward which she pointed, and saw the queen and her daughter in the palace of crystal, which was floating like a vessel, without oars or rudder, on the lake of quicksilver. He was ready to die with mingled joy and sorrow; he called to them with all his might, and they heard him, but how was he to reach them? While thinking over the means by

which he might accomplish this, the fairy lioness disappeared. He ran round and round the lake, but whenever the palace came close enough to him, on one side or the other, for him to spring upon it, it suddenly floated away again with terrible swiftness, and so his hopes were continually disappointed. The queen, fearing he would at length grow weary, called to him not to lose courage, that the fairy lioness wanted to tire him out, but that true love knew how to face all difficulties. She and Moufette then stretched out their hands toward him with imploring gestures. Seeing this, the king was filled with renewed courage, and raising his voice, he said that he would rather pass the remainder of his life in this melancholy region than go away without them. He needed great patience, for no king on earth ever spent such a wretched time before. He had only the ground, covered with briers and thorns, for his bed; his food consisted of wild fruits more bitter than gall, and he was incessantly engaged in defending himself from the monsters of the lake.

Three years passed in this manner, and the king could not flatter himself that he had gained the least advantage; he was almost in despair, and over and over again was tempted to throw himself in the lake, and he would certainly have done so if he could have thought that by such a deed he might alleviate the sufferings of the queen and the princess. He was running one day as usual, first to one side of the lake then to the other, when one of the most hideous of the dragons called him, and said to him: "If you will swear to me by your crown and scepter, by your royal mantle, by your wife and child, to give me, whenever I shall ask for it, a certain delicate morsel to eat, for which I have a taste, I will take you on my back, and I promise you that none of the monsters of this lake, who guard the palace, shall prevent us from carrying off the queen and Princess Moufette."

"Ah! my beloved dragon!" cried the king, "I swear to you, and to all the family of dragons, that I will give you your fill to eat of what you like, and will forever remain your humble servant." "Do not make any promises," replied the dragon,

"if you have any thought of not fulfilling them; for, in that case misfortunes will fall upon you that you will not forget as long as you live." The king renewed his protestations; he was dying of impatience to get possession of his dear queen. He mounted on the dragon's back, as if it was the finest horse in the world, but the other monsters now advanced to bar his passage. They fought together; nothing was to be heard but the sharp hissing of the serpents, nothing to be seen but fire, and sulphur, and saltpeter falling in every direction. At last the king reached the palace, but here his efforts had to be renewed, for the entrances were defended by bats, owls, and ravens; however, the dragon, with his claws, his teeth and tail, cut to pieces even the boldest of these. The queen, on her side, who was looking on at this fierce encounter, broke away pieces of the wall, and armed herself with these to help her dear husband. They were at last victorious; they ran into one another's arms, and the work of disenchantment was completed by a thunderbolt, which fell into the lake and dried it up.

The friendly dragon had disappeared with all the other monsters, and the king, by what means he could not guess, found himself again in his own capital, seated with his queen and Moufette, in a magnificent dining-hall, with a table spread with exquisite meats in front of them. Such joy and astonishment as theirs were unknown before. All their subjects ran in to see the queen and the young princess, who, to add to the wonder of it all, were so superbly dressed that the eye could hardly bear to look upon their dazzling jewels.

It is easy to imagine the festivities that now went on at the castle; masquerades, running at the ring, and tournaments attracted the greatest princes in the world; but even more were they attracted by the bright eyes of Moufette. Among those who were the handsomest and most accomplished in feats of arms, Prince Moufy was everywhere the most conspicuous. He was universally admired and applauded, and Moufette, who hitherto had been only in the company of dragons and serpents, did not withhold her share of praise. No day passed but Prince

Moufy showed her some fresh attention, in the hope of pleasing her, for he loved her deeply; and having offered himself as a suitor, he made known to the king and queen that his principality was of a beauty and extent that deserved their special attention.

The king replied that Moufette was at liberty to choose a husband, and that he only wished to please her and make her happy. The prince was delighted with this answer, and having already become aware that he was not indifferent to the princess, offered her his hand. She assured him that if he was not her husband, no other man should be, and Moufy, overcome with joy, threw himself at her feet, and in affectionate terms begged her to remember the promise she had given him. The prince and princess were betrothed, and Prince Moufy then returned to his principality to make preparations for the marriage. Moufette shed many tears at his departure, for she was troubled with a presentiment of evil which she could not explain. The queen, seeing that the prince was also overcome with sorrow, gave him the portrait of her daughter, and begged him rather to lessen the magnificence of the preparations than to delay his return. The prince, only too ready to obey such a command, promised to comply with what would be for his own happiness.

The princess occupied herself during his absence with her music, for she had, in a few months, learned to play well. One day, when she was in the queen's room, the king rushed in, his face bathed in tears, and taking his daughter in his arms: "Alas! my child," he cried. "Alas! wretched father, unhappy king!" He could say no more, for his voice was stifled with sobs. The queen and princess, in great alarm, asked him what was the matter, and at last he was able to tell them that a giant of an enormous height, who gave himself out to be an ambassador from the dragon of the lake, had just arrived; that in accordance with the promise, made by the king in return for the help he had received in fighting the monsters, the dragon demanded him to give up the princess, as he wished to make her into a pie for his dinner; the king added that he had bound

himself by solemn oaths to give him what he asked, and in those days no one ever broke his word.

When the queen heard this dreadful news, she uttered piercing cries, and clasped her child to her breast. "My life shall be taken," she said, "before my daughter shall be delivered up to that monster; let him rather take our kingdom and all that we possess. Unnatural father! can you possibly consent to such a cruel thing? What! my child made into a pie! The thought of it is intolerable! Send me this terrible ambassador; maybe the sight of my anguish may touch his heart."

The king made no reply, but went in search of the giant and brought him to the queen, who threw herself at his feet. She and her daughter implored him to have mercy upon them, and to persuade the dragon to take everything they possessed, and to spare Moufette's life; but the giant replied that the matter did not rest with him, and that the dragon was so obstinate and so fond of good things, that all the powers combined would not prevent his eating whatever he had taken into his head he would like for a meal. He further advised them, as a friend, to consent with a good grace, as otherwise greater evils might arise. At these words the queen fainted, and the princess, had she not been obliged to go to her mother's assistance, would have done the same.

No sooner was the sad news spread through the palace than the whole town learned it. Nothing was heard but weeping and wailing, for Moufette was greatly beloved. The king could not make up his mind to give her to the giant, and the giant, who had already waited some days, began to grow impatient, and to utter terrible threats. The king and queen, however, said to each other: "What worse thing could happen to us? If the dragon of the lake were to come and devour us all we could not be more distressed; if Moufette is put into a pie, we are lost!"

The giant now told them that he had received a message from his master, and that if the princess would agree to marry a nephew of his, the dragon would let her live; that the nephew was young and handsome; that, moreover, he was a prince, and

that she would be able to live with him very happily. This proposal somewhat lessened their grief; the queen spoke to the princess, but found her still more averse to this marriage than to the thought of death. "I cannot save my life by being unfaithful," said Moufette. "You promised me to Prince Moufy, and I will marry no one else; let me die; my death will insure the peace of your lives." The king then came and endeavored with all the tenderest of expressions to persuade her; but nothing moved her, and finally it was decided that she should be conducted to the summit of a mountain, and there await the dragon.

Everything was prepared for this great sacrifice; nothing so mournful had before been seen; nothing to be met anywhere but black garments, and pale and horrified faces. Four hundred maidens of the highest rank, dressed in long white robes, and crowned with cypress, accompanied the princess, who was carried in an open litter of black velvet, that all might look on this masterpiece of beauty. Her hair, tied with crape, hung over her shoulders, and she wore a crown of jasmine, mingled with a few marigolds. The grief of the king and queen, who followed, overcome by their deep sorrow, appeared the only thing that moved her. The giant, armed from head to foot, marched beside the litter, and looked with hungry eye at the princess, as if anticipating his share of her when she came to be eaten; the air resounded with sighs and sobs, and the road was flooded with the tears of the onlookers.

"Ah! frog, frog," cried the queen; "you have indeed forsaken me! Alas! why did you give me help in that unhappy region, and now withhold it from me? Would that I had then died, I should not now be lamenting the loss of all my hopes, I should not now have the anguish of seeing my dear Moufette on the point of being devoured!" The procession meanwhile was slowly advancing, and at last reached the summit of the fatal mountain. Here the cries and lamentations were redoubled; nothing more piteous had before been heard. The giant ordered every one to say farewell and to retire, and they all obeyed him, for in those days people were very simple

and submissive, and never sought for a remedy in their misfortunes.

The king and queen, and all the court, now ascended another mountain, whence they could see all that happened to the princess: and they had not to wait long, before they saw a dragon, half a league long, coming through the air. His body was so heavy that, notwithstanding his six large wings, he was hardly able to fly; he was covered with immense blue scales, and poisonous tongues of flame; his tail was twisted into as many as fifty and a half coils; each of his claws was the size of a windmill, and three rows of teeth, as long as those of an elephant could be seen inside his wide-open jaw. As the dragon slowly made his way toward the mountain, the good, faithful frog, mounted on the back of a hawk, flew rapidly to Prince Moufy. She wore her cap of roses, and although he was locked into his private room, she entered without a key, and said: "What are you doing here, unhappy lover? You sit dreaming of Moufette's beauty, and at this very moment she is exposed to the most frightful danger. Here is a rose-leaf; by blowing upon it, I can change it into a superb horse, as you will see."

There immediately appeared a horse, green in color, and with twelve hoofs and three heads, of which one emitted fire, another bombshells, and the third cannon-balls. The frog then gave the prince a sword, eight yards long and lighter than a feather. She clothed him with a single diamond, which he put on like a coat, and which, although as hard as a rock, was so pliable that he could move in it at his ease. "Go," she said, "run, fly to the rescue of her whom you love; the green horse I have given you will take you to her, and when you have delivered her, let her know the share I have had in the matter."

"Generous fairy," cried the prince. "I cannot at this moment show you all my gratitude; but from henceforth I am your faithful servitor."

He mounted the horse with the three heads, which instantly galloped off on its twelve hoofs, and went at a greater rate than three of the best ordinary horses, so that in a very little time the prince reached the mountain, where he found his dear

princess all alone, and saw the dragon slowly drawing near. The green horse immediately began to send forth fire, bombshells, and cannon-balls, which not a little astonished the monster; he received twenty balls in his throat, and his scales were somewhat damaged, and the bombshells put out one of his eyes. He grew furious, and made as if to throw himself on his enemy; but the prince's long sword was so finely tempered that he could use it as he liked, thrusting it in at times up to the hilt, and at others using it like a whip. The prince, on his side, would have suffered from the dragon's claws had it not been for his diamond coat, which was impenetrable.

Moufette had recognized her lover a long way off, for the diamond that covered him was transparent and bright, and she was seized with mortal terror at the danger he was in. The king and queen, however, were filled with renewed hope, for it was rather an unexpected thing to see a horse with three heads and twelve hoofs, sending forth fire and flame, and a prince in a diamond suit and armed with a formidable sword, arrive at such an opportune moment and fight with so much valor. The king put his hat on the top of his stick, and the queen tied her handkerchief to the end of another, as signals of encouragement to the prince; and all their court followed suit. As a fact, this was not necessary, for his own heart and the peril in which he saw Moufette were sufficient to animate his courage. And what efforts did he not make!—the ground was covered with stings, claws, horns, wings, and scales of the dragon; the earth was colored blue and green with the mingled blood of the dragon and the horse. Five times the prince fell to the ground, but each time he rose again and leisurely mounted his horse, and then there were cannonades, and rushing of flames, and explosions, such as were never heard or seen before. The dragon's strength at last gave way, and he fell; the prince gave him a final blow, and nobody could believe their eyes when from this last great wound there stepped forth a handsome and charming prince, in a coat of blue and gold velvet, embroidered with pearls, while on his head he wore a little Grecian helmet, shaded with white feathers. He rushed, his arms outspread,

toward Prince Moufy and embraced him. "What do I not owe you, valiant liberator?" he cried. "You have delivered me from a worse prison than ever before inclosed a king; I have languished there since, sixteen years ago, the fairy lioness condemned me to it; and such was her power that she would have forced me, against my will, to devour that adorable princess; lead me to her feet, that I may explain to her my misfortune."

Prince Moufy, surprised and delighted at this extraordinary termination to his adventure, showered civilities on the newly found prince. They hastened to rejoin Moufette, who thanked Heaven a thousand times for her unhoped-for happiness. The king, the queen, and all the court were already with her; everybody spoke at once, nobody listened to anybody else, and they all shed nearly as many tears of joy as they had before of grief. Finally, that nothing might be wanting to complete their rejoicing, the good frog appeared, flying through the air on her hawk, which had little bells of gold on its feet. When the tinkle, tinkle of these was heard, every one looked up and saw the cap of roses shining like the sun, and the frog as beautiful as the dawn.

The queen ran toward her, and took her by one of her little paws, and in the same moment the wise frog became a great queen, with a charming countenance. "I come," she cried, "to crown the faithful Moufette, who preferred to risk her life rather than be untrue to Prince Moufy." She thereupon took two myrtle wreaths, and placed them on the heads of the lovers, and giving three taps with her wand, all the dragon's bones formed themselves into a triumphal arch, in commemoration of the great event which had just taken place.

They all wended their way back to the town, singing wedding-songs, as gaily as they had before mournfully bewailed the sacrifice of the princess. The marriage took place the following day, and the joy with which it was celebrated may be imagined.

# *The Water of Life*

LONG before you or I were born there reigned, in a country a great way off, a king who had three sons. This king once fell very ill—so ill that nobody thought he could live. His sons were very much grieved at their father's sickness; and as they were walking together very mournfully in the garden of the palace, a little old man met them and asked what was the matter. They told him that their father was very ill, and that they were afraid nothing could save him. "I know what would," said the little old man; "it is the Water of Life. If he could have a draught of it he would be well again; but it is very hard to get." Then the eldest son said, "I will soon find it"; and he went to the sick king, and begged that he might go in search of the Water of Life, as it was the only thing that could save him. "No," said the king, "I would rather die than place you in such great danger as you must meet with in your journey." But he begged so hard that the king let him go; and the prince thought to himself, "If I bring my father this water, he will make me sole heir to his kingdom."

Then he set out: and when he had gone on his way some time he came to a deep valley overhung with rocks and woods; and as he looked around, he saw standing above him on one of the rocks a little ugly dwarf, with a sugar-loaf cap and a scarlet cloak; and the dwarf called to him and said, "Prince, whither so fast?" "What is that to thee, you ugly imp?" said the prince haughtily, and rode on.

But the dwarf was enraged at his behavior, and laid a fairy spell of ill luck upon him; so that as he rode on the mountain pass became narrower and narrower, and at last the way was

so straitened that he could not go a step forward: and when he thought to have turned his horse round and go back the way he came, he heard a loud laugh ringing round him, and found that the path was closed behind him, so that he was shut in all around. He next tried to get off his horse and make his way on foot, but again the laugh rang in his ears, and he found himself unable to move a step, and thus he was forced to abide spellbound.

Meantime the old king was lingering on in daily hope of his son's return, till at last the second son said, "Father, I will go in search of the Water of Life." For he thought to himself: "My brother is surely dead, and the kingdom will fall to me if I find the water." The king was at first very unwilling to let him go, but at last yielded to his wish. So he set out and followed the same road which his brother had done, and met with the same little elf, who stopped him at the same spot in the mountains, saying, as before, "Prince, prince, whither so fast?" "Mind your own affairs, busybody!" said the prince scornfully, and rode on.

But the dwarf put the same spell upon him as he had put on his elder brother; and he, too, was at last obliged to take up his abode in the heart of the mountains. Thus it is with proud silly people, who think themselves above every one else, and are too proud to ask or take advice.

When the second prince had thus been gone a long time, the youngest son said he would go and search for the Water of Life, and trusted he should soon be able to make his father well again. So he set out, and the dwarf met him, too, at the same spot in the valley, among the mountains, and said, "Prince, whither so fast?" And the prince said: "I am going in search of the Water of Life; because my father is ill, and like to die: can you help me? Pray be kind, and aid me if you can!" "Do you know where it is to be found?" asked the dwarf. "No," said the prince, "I do not. Pray tell me if you know." "Then as you have spoken to me kindly, and are wise enough to seek for advice, I will tell you how and where to go. The water you seek springs from a well in an enchanted castle; and, that you

may be able to reach it in safety, I will give you an iron wand and two little loaves of bread; strike the iron door of the castle three times with the wand, and it will open: two hungry lions will be lying down inside gaping for their prey, but if you throw them the bread they will let you pass; then hasten on to the well, and take some of the Water of Life before the clock strikes twelve; for if you tarry longer the door will shut upon you forever."

Then the prince thanked his little friend with the scarlet cloak for his friendly aid; and took the wand and the bread, and went traveling on and on, over sea and over land, till he came to his journey's end, and found everything to be as the dwarf had told him. The door flew open at the third stroke of the wand, and when the lions were quieted he went on through the castle and came at length to a beautiful hall. Around it he saw several knights sitting in a trance; then he pulled off their rings and put them on his own fingers. In another room he saw on a table a sword and a loaf of bread, which he also took. Further on he came to a room where a beautiful young lady sat upon a couch; and she welcomed him joyfully, and said if he would set her free from the spell that bound her, the kingdom should be his, if he would come back in a year and marry her. Then she told him that the well that held the Water of Life was in the palace gardens; and bade him make haste and draw what he wanted before the clock struck twelve.

He went on; and as he walked through beautiful gardens, he came to a delightful shady spot in which stood a couch; and he thought to himself, as he felt tired, that he would rest himself for a while and gaze on the lovely scenes around him. So he laid himself down, and sleep fell upon him unawares, so that he did not wake up till the clock was striking a quarter to twelve. Then he sprang from the couch dreadfully frightened, ran to the well, filled a cup that was standing by him full of water, and hastened to get away in time. Just as he was going out of the iron door it struck twelve, and the door fell so quickly upon him that it snapped off a piece of his heel.

When he found himself safe, he was overjoyed to think that

he had got the Water of Life; and as he was going on his way homeward, he passed by the little dwarf, who, when he saw the sword and the loaf, said: "You have made a noble prize; with the sword you can at a blow slay whole armies, and the bread will never fail you." Then the prince thought to himself, "I cannot go home to my father without my brothers"; so he said: "My dear friend, cannot you tell me where my two brothers are, who set out in search of the Water of Life before me, and never came back?" "I have shut them up by a charm between two mountains," said the dwarf, "because they were proud and ill-behaved, and scorned to ask advice." The prince begged so hard for his brothers, that the dwarf at last set them free, though unwillingly, saying: "Beware of them, for they have bad hearts." Their brother, however, was greatly rejoiced to see them, and told them all that had happened to him; how he had found the Water of Life, and had taken a cup full of it; and how he had set a beautiful princess free from a spell that bound her; and how she had engaged to wait a whole year, and then to marry him, and to give him the kingdom.

Then they all three rode on together, and on their way home came to a country that was laid waste by war and a dreadful famine, so that it was feared all must die for want. But the prince gave the king of the land the bread, and all his kingdom ate of it. And he lent the king the wonderful sword, and he slew the enemy's army with it; and thus the kingdom was once more in peace and plenty. In the same manner he befriended two other countries through which they passed on their way.

When they came to the sea, they got into a ship; and during their voyage the two eldest said to themselves, "Our brother has got the water which we could not find, therefore our father will forsake us and give him the kingdom, which is our right"; so they were full of envy and revenge, and agreed together how they could ruin him. Then they waited till he was fast asleep, and poured the Water of Life out of the cup, and took it for themselves, giving him bitter sea-water instead.

When they came to their journey's end, the youngest son

brought his cup to the sick king, that he might drink and be healed. Scarcely, however, had he tasted the bitter sea-water when he became worse even than he was before; and then both the elder sons came in, and blamed the youngest for what he had done; and said that he wanted to poison their father, but that they had found the Water of Life, and had brought it with them. He no sooner began to drink of what they brought him than he felt his sickness leave him, and was as strong and well as in his younger days. Then they went to their brother and laughed at him, and said: "Well, brother, you found the Water of Life, did you? You have had the trouble and we shall have the reward. Pray, with all your cleverness, why did not you manage to keep your eyes open? Next year one of us will take away your beautiful princess, if you do not take care. You had better say nothing about this to our father, for he does not believe a word you say; and if you tell tales, you shall lose your life into the bargain: but be quiet, and we will let you off."

The old king was still very angry with his youngest son, and thought that he really meant to have taken away his life; so he called his court together and asked what should be done, and all agreed that he ought to be put to death. The prince knew nothing of what was going on, till one day, when the king's chief huntsman went a-hunting with him, and they were alone in the wood together, the huntsman looked so sorrowful that the prince said: "My friend, what is the matter with you?" "I cannot and dare not tell you," said he. But the prince begged very hard, and said: "Only tell me what it is, and do not think I shall be angry, for I will forgive you." "Alas!" said the huntsman, "the king has ordered me to shoot you." The prince started at this, and said: "Let me live, and I will change dresses with you; you shall take my royal coat to show to my father, and do you give me your shabby one." "With all my heart," said the huntsman. "I am sure I shall be glad to save you, for I could not have shot you." Then he took the prince's coat, and gave him the shabby one, and went away through the wood.

Some time after, three grand embassies came to the old king's court, with rich gifts of gold and precious stones for his youngest son; now all these were sent from the three kings to whom he had lent his sword and loaf of bread, in order to rid them of their enemy and feed their people. This touched the old king's heart, and he thought his son might still be guiltless, and said to his court: "O that my son were still alive! how it grieves me that I had him killed!" "He is still alive," said the huntsman; "and I am glad that I had pity on him and saved him: for when the time came, I could not shoot him, but let him go in peace, and brought home his royal coat." At this the king was overwhelmed with joy, and made it known throughout all his kingdom that if his son would come back to his court he would forgive him.

Meanwhile the princess was eagerly waiting till her deliverer should come back; and ordered a road made leading up to her palace all of shining gold; telling her courtiers that whoever came on horseback, and rode straight up to the gate, was her true lover; and that they must let him in: but whoever rode on one side of it, they might be sure was not the right one; and that they must send him away at once.

The time soon came when the eldest brother thought that he would make haste to go to the princess, and say that he was the one who had set her free, and that he should have her for his wife, and the kingdom with her. As he came before the palace and saw the golden road, he stopped to look at it, and he thought to himself, "It is a pity to ride upon this beautiful road"; so he turned aside and rode on the right-hand side of it. But when he came to the gate, the guards, who had seen the road he took, said to him, he could not be what he said he was, and must go about his business.

The second prince set out soon afterward on the same errand; and when he came to the golden road, and his horse had set one foot upon it, he stopped to look at it, and thought it very beautiful, and said to himself, "What a pity it is that anything should tread here!" Then he, too, turned aside and rode on the left side of it. But when he came to the gate the guards

said he was not the true prince, and that he, too, must go away about his business; and away he went.

Now when the full year was come round, the third brother left the forest in which he had lain hid for fear of his father's anger, and set out in search of his betrothed bride. So he journeyed on, thinking of her all the way, and rode so quickly that he did not even see what the road was made of, but went with his horse straight over it; and as he came to the gate it flew open, and the princess welcomed him with joy, and said he was her deliverer, and should now be her husband and lord of the kingdom. When the first joy at their meeting was over, the princess told him she had heard of his father having forgiven him, and of his wish to have him home again: so before his wedding with the princess he went to visit his father, taking her with him. Then he told him everything; how his brothers had cheated and robbed him, and yet that he had borne all these wrongs for the love of his father. And the old king was very angry, and wanted to punish his wicked sons; but they made their escape, and got into a ship and sailed away over the wide sea, and where they went to nobody knew and nobody cared.

And now the old king gathered together his court, and asked all his kingdom to come and celebrate the wedding of his son and the princess. And young and old, noble and squire, gentle and simple, came at once on the summons; and among the rest came the friendly dwarf, with the sugar-loaf hat and a new scarlet cloak.

> "And the wedding was held, and the merry bells rung,
> And all the good people they danced and they sung,
> And feasted and frolick'd I can't tell how long."

# *The Green Knight*

ONCE on a time there was a king who was a widower, and he had an only daughter. But it is an old saying, that the bitterest grief cannot last forever, so, in course of time the king married a queen who had two daughters. Now this queen—well, she was no better than stepmothers are wont to be; snappish and spiteful she always was to her stepdaughter.

Well, a long time after, when they were grown up, these three girls, war broke out, and the king had to go forth to fight for his country and his kingdom. But before he went the three daughters had leave to say what the king should buy and bring home for each of them, if he won the day against the foe.

So the stepdaughters were to speak first, as you may fancy, and say what they wished.

Well, the first wished for a golden spinning-wheel, so small that it could stand on a sixpenny-piece; and the second, she begged for a golden winder, so small that it could stand on a sixpenny-piece; that was what they wanted to have, and till they had them there was no spinning or winding to be got out of them. But his own daughter, she would ask for no other thing than that he would greet the Green Knight in her name.

So the king went out to war, and whithersoever he went he won, and however things turned out he brought the things he had promised his stepdaughters; but he had clean forgotten what his own daughter had begged him to do, till at last he made a feast because he had won the day.

Then it was that he set eyes on a Green Knight, and all at once his daughter's words came into his head, and he greeted him in her name. The Green Knight thanked him for the

greeting, and gave him a book which looked like a hymn-book with parchment clasps. That the king was to take home and give her; but he was not to unclasp it, or the princess either, till she was all alone.

So, when the king had done fighting and feasting he went home again, and he had scarce got inside the door before his stepdaughters clung round him to get what he had promised to buy them. Yes, he said, he had brought them what they wished; but his own daughter, she held back and asked for nothing, and the king forgot all about her request, till one day when he was going out, and put on the coat he had worn at the feast; then just as he thrust his hand into his pocket for his handkerchief, he felt the book, and knew what it was.

So he gave it to his daughter, and said he was to greet her with it from the Green Knight, and she mustn't unclasp it till she was all alone.

Well, that evening when she was by herself in her bedroom she unclasped the book, and as soon as she did so she heard a strain of music, so sweet she had never heard the like of it; and then, what do you think? Why, the Green Knight came to her and told her the book was such a book that whenever she unclasped it he must come to her, and it would be all the same wherever she might be, and when she clasped it again he would be off and away again.

Well, she unclasped the book often and often in the evenings when she was alone and at rest, and the knight always came to her, and was almost always there. But her stepmother, who was always thrusting her nose into everything, found out there was some one with her in her room, and she was not long in telling it to the king. But he wouldn't believe it. No, he said, they must watch first and see if it was so before they trumped up such stories, and took his wife to task for them.

So one evening they stood outside the door and listened, and it seemed as though they heard some one talking inside; but when they went in there was no one.

"Who was it you were talking with?" asked the stepmother, both sharp and cross.

"It was no one, indeed," said the princess.

"Nay," said the stepmother, "I heard it as plain as day."

"Oh," said the princess, "I only lay and read aloud out of a prayer-book."

"Show it me," said the queen.

"Well, then, it was only a prayer-book after all, and she must have leave to read that," the king said.

But the stepmother thought just the same as before, and so she bored a hole through the wall and stood prying about there. So one evening when she heard that the knight was in the room, she tore open the door and came flying into her step-daughter's room like a blast of wind; but the maid was not slow in clasping the book, and the knight was off and away in a trice; but however quick she had been, her stepmother caught a glimpse of him, so that she was sure some one had been there.

It happened just then that the king was setting out on a long, long journey; and while he was away the queen had a deep pit dug down into the ground, and there she built up a dungeon, and in the stone and mortar she laid ratsbane and other strong poisons, so that not so much as a mouse could get through the wall. As for the master-mason, he was well paid, and gave his word to fly the land; but he didn't, for he stayed where he was. Then the princess was thrown into that dungeon with her maid, and when they were inside the queen walled up the door, and left only a little hole open at the top to let down food to them. So there the poor maid sat and sorrowed, and the time seemed long, and longer than long; but at last she remembered she had her book with her, and took it out and unclasped it. First of all she heard the same sweet strain she had heard before, and then arose a grievous sound of wailing, and just then the Green Knight came.

"I am at death's door," he said; and then he told her that her stepmother had laid poison in the mortar, and he did not know if he should ever come out alive. So she clasped the

book up as fast as she could, but even then she heard the same wailing sound.

But you must know the maid who was shut up with her had a sweetheart, and she sent word to him to go to the master mason, and beg him to make the hole at the top big enough for them to creep out. If he would do that, the princess would pay him so well he could live in plenty all his days. He did so without being discovered, and they set out and traveled far, far away in strange lands, she and her maid, and wherever they came they asked after the Green Knight.

So after a long, long time they came to a castle which was all hung with black; and just as they were passing by it a shower of rain fell, and so the princess stepped into the church porch to wait till the rain was over. As she stood there, a young man and an old man came by, who also wished to take shelter; but the princess drew away farther into a corner, so that they did not see her.

"Why is it," said the young man, "that the king's castle is hung with black?"

"Don't you know," said the graybeard, "the prince here is sick to death, he whom they call the Green Knight?" And so he went on telling him how it had all happened, and when the young man had listened to the story, he asked if there was any one who could make him well again.

"Nay, nay," said the other; "there is but one cure, and that is if the maiden who was shut up in the dungeon were to come and pluck healing plants in the fields, and boil them in sweet milk, and wash him with them thrice."

Then he went on reckoning up the plants that were needful before he could get well again.

All this the princess heard, and she kept it in her head; and when the rain was over the two men went away, nor did she bide there long either.

So when they got home to the house in which they lived, out they went at once to get all kinds of plants and grasses in the field and wood, she and the maid, and they plucked and gathered early and late till she had got all that she was to boil.

Then she bought her a doctor's hat and a doctor's gown, and went to the king's castle, and offered to make the prince well again.

"No, no; it is no good," said the king. So many had been there and tried, but he always got worse instead of better. But she would not yield, and gave her word he should be well, and that soon and happily. Well, then, she might have leave to try, and so she went into the Green Knight's bedroom and washed him the first time. And when she came the next day he was so well he could sit up in bed; the day after he was man enough to walk about the room, and the third he was as well and lively as a fish in the water.

"Now he may go out hunting," said the doctor.

Then the king was as overjoyed with his good health as a bird in broad day and would do all things for the doctor. But the doctor would have nothing and said she must go home.

There she threw off her hat and gown, and dressed herself smart, and made a feast, and then she unclasped the book. Then arose the same joyful strains as of old, and in a trice the Green Knight was there, and he wondered much to know how she had come thither.

So she told him all about it, and how it had happened; and when they had eaten and drunk he took her straight up to the castle, and told the king the whole story from beginning to end. Then there was such a bridal and such a feast; and when it was over they set off to the bride's home, and there was great joy in her father's heart.

# *The Enchanted Forest*

ONCE upon a time there lived a noble lord who spent all his fortune on feasting and good living, and at last there was not another penny in his purse, and he had nothing left him but an old, old castle on the edge of a great forest, his wife, and three beautiful daughters.

So there he had to live in the old castle, and the countess and the three beautiful daughters had to scrub the floors and wash the dishes, for they were too poor to keep even a servant.

Now, neither the countess nor her daughters had ever thought of taking cookery lessons, and so they were obliged to live on boiled potatoes, because that was the only dish they could manage.

But the noble lord hated boiled potatoes, and when he found there was nothing else to eat, he became angry and disagreeable, and at times the tempers he flew into were very dreadful indeed. So the countess and her daughters wept bitterly, but they went on boiling potatoes, for what else could they do?

Now, one fine summer's day the lord became so hungry that he took his bow and arrow and went into the forest to seek a stag which he might kill.

"If I have to cook it myself, it will be better than cold potatoes," he said to himself, for he knew that it was washing-day.

Now, the forest was said to be enchanted. Many a man had gone into it, folk declared, but none had ever come out, for wicked trolls lurked there, ready to seize the wanderer, and wild beasts to tear him limb from limb. But the noble lord believed nothing of all this. He strode manfully over hill and dale, and crept through bush and thicket, but never a stag did he see.

At last he grew tired, and sat down to rest beneath a lofty oak-tree. And when he lifted his eyes, lo and behold! a savage bear stood before him. At this the poor lord began to tremble with fear, for he was not prepared for bear-hunting.

He picked up his spear to defend himself as well as he could.

The monster came nearer; then, with awful clearness, as plainly as you or I could say them, it growled out these words:

"Insolent robber, do you dare to steal honey from my tree? You shall pay for this with your life!"

"Oh," begged the lord, "I pray you, Sir Bear, do not devour me! I never touched your honey—indeed, I never liked it even as a child."

But the Bear went on growling.

"Wretched man, you shall not get off so easily. Give me your eldest daughter, Wulfhilda, to wife, else I will eat you without mercy!"

The lord was so frightened that he would have given the Bear all three daughters, and his wife into the bargain, had he asked for them.

"She shall be yours, Sir Bear," he said, beginning to feel much better. "But," he added, cunningly, "you must come and fetch her yourself, and bring a gift for me, her father; for that, you know, is the custom of the country."

"Done!" replied the Bear. "Shake hands!" and gave him a hairy paw. "In seven days I shall come to fetch my bride, and you shall have a hundredweight of gold."

"Done!" said the lord, and they parted on excellent terms.

Then the lord ran home as fast as his legs could carry him, and told his wife and daughters everything that had happened.

Now, when the beautiful Wulfhilda heard that she was to marry a monstrous bear, she fainted with terror, and her mother wrung her hands and tore her hair, and her two lovely sisters wept almost to break their hearts.

But the lord went out, looked at the stout walls and the moat that surrounded the castle, locked and barred the iron gate, raised the drawbridge, and bolted every door and window.

Then he placed Wulfhilda in the turret-chamber, turned the key upon her, and put it in his pocket.

And so six days went by. But on the seventh a great stir arose in the forest. There was a cracking of whips, a blowing of horns, a stamping and a champing of horses, a rolling and a rattling of wheels, and all at once a splendid coach, surrounded by horsemen, came flying over the meadow straight up to the castle-gates.

Then, without anybody touching them, all the bolts in the castle sprang back, the gates flew open, the drawbridge crashed down, and a young prince, handsome as a picture, stepped out of the coach.

He was clad in velvet and silver embroidery, a gold chain hung round his neck, his hat was studded with pearls and diamonds, while the brooch that held his ostrich-feather was worth a king's ransom.

Quick as a whirlwind he flew up the winding stairs that led to the turret-chamber, and next moment he was down again with his trembling bride in his arms.

Now, the noise and clatter aroused the lord from his morning sleep, and he opened the window and looked out into the courtyard. And there he saw the great coach and horses, the knights and pages, and his daughter Wulfhilda in the arms of a strange man, who bore her swiftly to the coach; and ere he could stir a finger, the cavalcade, horses and horsemen and all, had vanished.

Then the lord lifted up his voice, and cried:

"Oh, Bride of Bruin,
Goest thou to ruin?"

And the voice of Wulfhilda wailed from far away:

"I cannot tell!
Farewell, farewell!"

But the countess, Wulfhilda's mother, believed that what her husband had seen and heard was nothing but an evil

dream. So she took her bunch of keys and went up to the turret to seek her daughter. But Wulfhilda was gone, and not a trace of her could be found. Only, upon the table, there lay a little silver key.

Then the countess went sadly down the stairs, clothed herself in black, and wept without ceasing for three days. And the lord and the two lovely daughters who were left wept also.

On the fourth day the lord left his apartment to get a breath of fresh air; and there in the courtyard he saw a splendid chest of ebony-wood, securely locked, and so heavy that he could not lift it.

He guessed what was inside it, hastened to fetch the little silver key, and opened it. And there, sure enough, he found the hundredweight of gold which the Bear had promised him.

At the sight of so much wealth he then and there forgot his grief, bought horses and dogs, and fine dresses for his wife and daughters, hired servants without number, and began his old life of feasting and pleasure.

And at last all the gold in the ebony chest was spent and so the lord had to send away his servants, sell his horses and dogs and fine clothes, and go back to his old castle on the edge of the enchanted wood. And the countess and her two daughters went down into the kitchen again to boil the potatoes.

Now, of all his possessions the lord had kept nothing but an old falcon, with which to go a-hunting. And one day he let the falcon fly; and the bird soared high in the air and would not return to his wrist, try as he might to lure it.

And the lord followed the falcon's flight as best he could over the wide plain; but the bird flew toward the dreadful forest, and the lord, who did not dare to enter it now, gave up the falcon for lost.

Then, all at once, a giant eagle rose up from the forest and flew at the falcon. And the falcon no sooner saw the eagle than, quick as an arrow, he returned to his master, to seek safety from his enemy.

But the eagle pounced down upon them, dug one great claw into the lord's shoulder, and with the other he crushed the falcon to death.

And the lord, in great fear, tried to free himself with his spear, and thrust and stabbed at the eagle. But the eagle caught the spear and broke it as though it were a reed.

"Insolent wretch!" he screamed, "do you dare to disturb the air that is my territory? You shall pay for this misdeed with your life!"

"Spare me, Sir Eagle, I pray!" begged the lord. "I have done nothing, and my falcon has paid for his offense!"

"You shall not get off so easily," returned the Eagle. "I have a fancy this day for a dish of human meat, and you look a fat and juicy morsel."

"Spare me!" cried the lord; "ask of me what you please, but spare my life."

"Good!" said the Eagle. "I take you at your word. You have two lovely daughters, and I want a wife. Give me your Adeline, and you shall go in peace."

"And will you fetch her and bring a gift for me, according to the custom of the country?" asked the cunning lord.

"I will," said the Eagle. "In seven weeks I come to fetch my bride, and you shall have two hundredweight of gold."

And the lord went home, well pleased with his bargain; but he said nothing at all of what had happened, for he feared his wife's reproaches and his daughters' tears.

Now, the lovely Adeline was a great spinner, and she could weave as no other maiden in the country. And it happened that she had just finished a splendid piece of linen, as fine as cobwebs, and this she spread out each day upon the meadow outside the castle-gates, in order that it might bleach in the sun.

And when seven weeks had gone by, she rose as usual with the lark, tripped to the meadow, and spread out her linen, that it might be moistened by the morning dew.

All at once she saw a splendid cavalcade of horsemen coming toward her. Now, it being so early in the day, she had her

simplest gown on. She therefore hid herself behind a wild rose-bush; but the handsomest knight of all that company galloped up to the rose-bush, and said, in a gentle voice:

"I've sought thee far and wide,
Then prithee do not hide,
But hasten to my side,
O Eagle's lovely bride."

When Adeline heard this, she trembled sorely. The knight was good to look upon, but the words "Eagle's bride" froze the blood in her veins. She sank down into the grass, fainting with horror, and when she awoke again, she found herself in the stranger's arms on a fiery steed that bore them swiftly into the magic forest.

Meanwhile, the countess had prepared the breakfast. And when Adeline did not come in, she sent her husband to find her. But when he, too, did not return, the countess went out herself.

Meanwhile, the lord, who guessed very well what had happened, hastened to the meadow; and there, beside the rose-bush, lay two golden eggs, each as big as barrels. At sight of this treasure he could keep his secret no longer. He called the countess, and told her everything.

But the countess was sorely grieved, and cried:

"Oh, shameless one, to sell your flesh and blood for gold!"

Thereupon she fell to sobbing and lamenting, and reproached the lord most bitterly for having sacrificed his second daughter to a monstrous eagle.

And the lord said nothing, for that was all he had to say. But he rolled the two golden eggs into his treasure-house, went into mourning for three days, and thought of how he could now begin the old merry life again.

Then everything happened exactly as it had happened before. There was feasting and dancing at the castle all day long, until the golden eggs had dwindled down to the size of peas. And the lord was forced to sell everything he had and to live on potatoes once more.

Now, one day he set off in pursuit of a flock of pheasants, and he followed them to the edge of a gloomy wood, though he dared not enter it. And there he beheld a large pond which he had never seen before; and this pond was full of speckled trout, that could be plainly seen in the clear water.

The lord was overjoyed at this discovery. He hastened home, knitted himself a net, and went back to the pond next morning.

Then he saw a little boat among the reeds, and a pair of oars in the boat. He jumped in gaily, rowed into the middle of the pond, cast his net, caught more fish than he could carry, and started back to the shore in great joy at his good fortune.

But all at once, when he was scarcely a stone's-throw from the land, his boat stopped and stood motionless. And, do what he would, the lord could not make it budge an inch.

Then the waters seemed to rush from under him, and the little boat rose high above the surface. The fisherman turned white with fear. He saw the shore receding on every side; the pond grew and grew until it became a huge sea. The waves rose up, and the waters roared and foamed about him. And now he saw, to his horror, that he and his boat were being carried on the back of a monstrous shark.

Suddenly the monster dived, so that the skiff was once more afloat on the water. And next moment the awful fish had risen to the surface and opened its fearful jaws, and from out the black cavern there came rumbling these words:

"Insolent fisherman, why do you murder my subjects? You shall pay for this misdeed with your life!"

Now, the lord, having heard this sort of thing before, was beginning to get used to it. He soon recovered from his fright, and said:

"Do not be angry, I pray you, Sir Shark, or whatever you be, but grant me an extra course for my dinner. You are welcome to take pot-luck with me whenever you choose to do so."

"Not so fast," returned the fish. "Know you not that

might is right? You stole my subjects, that you might devour them, and I shall devour you!" And the monster opened his jaws still further, as though he were about to swallow the entire boat.

"Spare me!" cried the lord. "As you see, I am but a meager morsel for so great a creature as you."

The Shark considered for a moment.

"Very well," he returned, "you have a lovely daughter, Esmeralda by name. Give her to me to be my wife, and I will spare your life."

At this the lord was well pleased.

"She shall be yours," he said. "You are a noble son-in-law; no honest father could refuse you. But, tell me, what gift are you prepared to offer, according to the custom of the country?"

"I have neither gold nor silver," replied the Shark. "But at the bottom of this lake there lies a great treasure of pearls. They shall be yours."

"Done!" said the lord.

"In seven moons," went on the monster, "I come to fetch my bride."

Thereupon he flapped his tail and drove the boat and fisherman swiftly to the shore. Then the lord went home with his trout, but said not a word of his adventure. And the lovely Esmeralda ate her fish, little dreaming how dearly she would have to pay for them.

And when six moons had come and gone, the lord went on a journey. For he bethought himself of his bargain, and he was afraid of Esmeralda's grief.

And when the seventh moon was at the full, a splendid company of knights came galloping up to the castle-gates.

Now, the lovely Esmeralda was in the garden gathering raspberries, and when she heard the stir and clatter without, she peeped through a gap in the fence, and seeing the noble array of knights and squires, she would have fled. But the handsomest horseman of them all leaped the fence and caught her in his arms.

Then Esmeralda cried out in terror, but the knight whispered in her ear:

> "The waters are deep, the waters are blue,
> They are waiting, my true love, for you, for you!"

And, swiftly as lightning, he lifted her into the saddle, and away they went over hill and dale, far, far out to the enchanted forest.

And the countess, hearing her daughter's cries, ran out in terror to know what had happened; but Esmeralda and all the splendid cavalcade had vanished. Only her basket of raspberries lay by the garden fence, and beside the basket, lo and behold! there stood three sacks of brand-new linen that felt as though they were filled with peas.

The countess was too grieved to examine them more closely. She ran hither and thither, calling her daughter in piteous accents; but getting no answer, and finding not a trace of Esmeralda, she sat down on a kitchen chair and began to weep bitterly.

And the countess continued to weep until her lord's return. Then the lord listened to her story, and as soon as she had finished he ran out into the courtyard and opened one of the linen bags that stood there.

It was full of pearls as big as garden peas, perfect in shape, and of the finest quality.

Then the lord rubbed his hands with satisfaction, turned to his wife, and said:

"Do not grieve for your daughter, for 'tis a fair bargain I have made; and every tear you have shed is paid for by a pearl."

Thereupon he told her his adventure with the monster fish.

Then the countess tore her hair, and blamed him most bitterly for what he had done.

"Inhuman father!" she said. "Is it for this miserable treasure that you have sold the only child that was left to us? Three fair daughters had we—oh, Wulfhilda, Adeline, Esmeralda, where are you now?"

And the lord held his tongue, for he was ashamed; and the countess went on weeping, and would not be comforted.

But, after many moons, it came to pass that Heaven took pity on the countess and sent a little son to cheer her loneliness.

And the lord, too, was well pleased at the birth of the child, and there was great rejoicing throughout the castle. And his parents called him Godfrey the Marvelous.

The boy was beautiful as the day, and strong as a young lion; and the countess guarded him as the apple of her eye.

Yet, though she loved him with a great love, she could not forget her three daughters, and often, when she fondled the boy, the tears would roll down her cheeks as she thought of her lost ones.

Now, when the lad grew older, he saw that his mother wept, and asked her why she was so sad. But the countess would not tell him.

At last the lad begged so earnestly to know the cause of her sorrow that his mother told him everything. And no sooner had he heard the story of his three lovely sisters than he resolved to go to the enchanted forest and seek to rescue them.

He said not a word of what he meant to do, to his father and mother; but, next morning, at daybreak, he rose stealthily, saddled his horse, put on his suit of mail, and, taking his sword in his hand, rode bravely into the dreadful wood.

And when he had gone half a day's journey without meeting any adventure, he came to a spot where the trees grew so thickly that he could ride no further.

Then he leaped from his horse, tethered it to a tree, and with his trusty sword hewed his way through the brushwood.

At length he came to where a little stream wound its way through a green valley. He followed the windings of the stream, and presently he spied in the distance a towering rock, and a cave at the foot of the rock. And before the cave he saw what looked like a human figure.

At this sight the bold lad quickened his steps, and, coming nearer to the cave, beheld a young and beautiful woman sitting on the grass. On her lap she held a tiny baby bear, which she

was kissing and fondling. A second little bear was gamboling about her, now standing on his hind legs, now turning somersaults, at which the lady laughed right merrily.

After what his mother had told him, Godfrey knew that this beautiful lady could be none other than his eldest sister, Wulfhilda; and straightway he hastened toward her.

But no sooner did she see the lad than she gave a great cry, threw the litttle bear into the grass, ran to meet the stranger, and spoke to him thus:

"Unhappy youth! what evil star has led you hither? In this cave dwells a fearful bear, who devours every human creature that comes this way. Fly, I entreat you, and save yourself!"

He bowed gallantly and replied:

"Fear nothing, fair lady. I know this forest and what adventures it contains, and I am come to break the enchantment that holds you prisoner."

"Oh, foolish boy!" said the lady, "who are you that dares to meddle with magic?"

And he answered:

"I am Godfrey, called the Marvelous, son of that lord whom this forest robbed of three lovely daughters. Are you not Wulfhilda, his first-born?"

On hearing these words, Wulfhilda, for she it was, grew still more terrified. She embraced the youth tenderly, but she trembled with fear for the great danger he was in.

Then she led him into the cave, to find a place where she could hide him. The cave was very large and gloomy. In one corner lay a heap of moss, which served the bear and his cubs for a resting-place. But in the opposite corner there stood a splendid bed hung with red damask, embroidered in gold, and this was Wulfhilda's.

Godfrey the Marvelous crept underneath the bed, and his sister drew the damask draperies about him, warning him earnestly neither to cough nor sneeze, if he valued his life.

Scarcely was the lad in hiding when a fearful growling was heard and the giant bear thundered into the cave, and straightway began to sniff about the room with blood-stained snout.

He had fallen upon Godfrey's gallant steed in the forest and had torn it limb from limb.

And Wulfhilda's knees shook with fright, for it was plain that the bear, her husband, scented a stranger in the cave. She therefore did not cease to caress him, stroking his back with her velvety hand, and scratching his ears with great tenderness. But the angry beast was not so easily to be pacified.

"I smell the smell of human flesh," he growled, sniffing and snorting in a very disagreeable way.

"You are mistaken, my love," returned his wife. "How should a human being come into these desert parts?"

"I smell human flesh," repeated the Bear, getting so close to the bed that Godfrey began to feel very bad indeed.

But in this desperate plight Wulfhilda, of a sudden, grew very brave.

"You go too far, Sir Bear," she said. "This bed is mine. You soil my silken hangings with your unclean paws. Do not touch them, or beware my anger!"

But the Bear took no heed, and went on sniffing and snorting about the bed. At length, just as he was about to poke his great snout under the draperies, Wulfhilda took heart, and thrust at him so violently with her little foot that he was cowed, crept humbly to his pile of moss, laid himself down, and began to lick his cubs. Presently he fell soundly asleep and snored as only a bear can snore.

Thereupon Wulfhilda fetched wine and cake from her store, and bade her brother eat and drink.

"Be of good cheer," she said, "for now your danger is almost passed." And having eaten all the cake and drunk all the wine, Godfrey fell into a deep sleep, for he was tired with his adventure.

And lo! when he awoke he was lying upon a splendid bed of state, in a chamber with silken hangings. By his bedside, upon a velvet ottoman, he saw his clothes, his armor, and a silver bell. And to make certain that he was not dreaming, he rang the bell; and immediately there entered a pretty page clad in pale blue silk and silver, who bowed very low, and said:

"Command me, sire; Prince Ethelbert the Bear and his fair consort bade me tell you that they await your coming."

Thereupon Godfrey dressed himself with the help of the pretty page as quickly as might be and entered the antechamber. Here he found a crowd of bowing courtiers awaiting him; then the page led him through splendid apartments to the audience-chamber, where Wulfhilda received him with all the state of a princess. Beside her stood two lovely children, boy and girl.

Next moment the door was opened, and Ethelbert the Bear came in. But he was a bear no longer, for he had turned into the handsomest and most charming of princes, and he lost no time in embracing his brother-in-law in a very friendly fashion.

Then he told the youth how it was he came to be enchanted.

An evil wizard had turned him into a fearsome bear; but every seventh day the magic lost its power and he became a prince again for four-and-twenty hours. Then, as soon as the silver stars grew pale in the sky, the enchantment fell once more upon him. His palace became a steep and barren rock, the fair park was changed into a desert, the fountains into dreary swamps, the prince became a bear, the knights and squires moles and weasels; while the maids of honor were transformed into owls and bats that hooted and screamed by day and by night.

But over the lovely Wulfhilda the wizard had no power at all; and though her husband became a bear and their children cubs, she herself remained a woman always. And because on one day out of every seven she was the happiest of wives with two pretty children and a handsome and engaging prince for husband, she said to herself:

"I will be content with my fate, for marriage is ever a lottery, and it is not given to every wife to be merry once a week; nay, I have heard of women who have bears for husbands for seven days out of every seven."

Thus she had dwelt with Ethelbert the Bear for one-and-twenty years; but, since we live only when we are happy, and

Wulfhilda had been happy for but one-seventh that term, she was still a young and lovely woman when Godfrey, her brother, came to her.

Now, all this Wulfhilda and Ethelbert related to the youth as they took a walk together in the splendid park. Then the prince and princess ordered a great feast in their brother's honor, and there was feasting and rejoicing all day long, while the minstrels made sweet music and the maids of honor danced with the knights and squires.

But when the stars began to pale in the sky the prince grew restless, and whispered in his wife's ear. Whereupon Wulfhilda took her brother aside and spoke sadly thus:

"Beloved brother, we must part. The hour of enchantment is nigh, and soon all the pleasures of this palace will be no more. Ethelbert fears for you. The moment he becomes a bear once again he would not be able to resist his brutish instincts, but would tear you to pieces. Go, therefore, and leave this miserable forest, never to return."

"Sister," replied Godfrey, "I cannot part from you thus. I sought you out so that I might break this accursed enchantment. Tell me what I can do to accomplish this?"

"Alas!" returned his sister, "that is what no mortal has power to do."

Thereupon Ethelbert entreated the youth so earnestly to fly from the danger that threatened him that he began to yield.

Now, when Godfrey had embraced his sister, Ethelbert took from his wallet three bear's hairs, gave them to the lad, and said:

"Do not despise this gift; but when you are in great peril, rub these hairs between your fingers, and help will be at hand."

Then he led him into the courtyard, where stood a splendid coach drawn by six coal-black steeds and surrounded by knights and squires.

"Farewell, my brother!" cried Ethelbert the Bear.

"Farewell, my brother!" replied Godfrey, and quickly leaped into the coach, and away it went over hill and dale, over

streams and meadows, through forests and through deserts, never stopping nor slackening its giddy pace.

But when the last star faded from the sky, Godfrey found himself of a sudden thrown roughly to the ground, he knew not how. Coach and horses had vanished, but by the glimmer of the dawn he saw between his feet a nutshell drawn by six black ants in full gallop. Then he understood what had happened, and took care not to tread upon a single ant.

And when the sun had risen he looked about him, and saw that he was still in the midst of the magic forest. Thereupon he resolved to seek out his two other sisters and learn their fate.

For three days and nights he wandered through the forest without meeting a single adventure. He had just finished the last morsel of the food Wulfhilda had placed in his satchel, when he heard a great rustling of wings in the air above him. He looked up, and beheld a mighty eagle swooping down upon a lofty tree, in which he had his nest.

Godfrey rejoiced at this discovery, and hid himself among the bracken until the eagle should leave the nest again. For seven weary hours he waited; then at length the great bird rose from the tree and soared high into the air. When the eagle was but a speck in the distance, the youth stepped from his hiding-place and cried aloud:

"Adeline, beloved sister, if you dwell in this lofty oak, answer me! I am Godfrey, called the Marvelous, your brother, and I am come hither to break the mighty enchantment that holds you prisoner."

Scarcely had he ended ere a soft voice replied, as from the clouds:

"Godfrey the Marvelous, your sister Adeline bids you welcome. Come to her, for she is eager to embrace you."

On hearing these words Godfrey was filled with gladness, and immediately tried to climb the lofty tree. But this he could not do, for the trunk was of great thickness, so that he could gain no hold, and the nearest branches were beyond his reach.

While he was still wondering what he could do there was a rustling in the branches, and lo! a silken rope-ladder fell at his feet. And by this means he speedily climbed to the top of the tree, and here the Eagle's nest was perched.

The nest was roomy, and as strongly built as any house. It was sheltered by an awning lined with rose-colored satin, and beneath this awning sat a young and lovely woman, who, Godfrey knew, could be no other than his second sister, the beautiful Adeline. Upon her lap lay a young eaglet, which she was busily tending.

She welcomed her brother tenderly, and told him the manner of her unhappy husband's enchantment.

Now, Edgar the Eagle's story was well-nigh the same as Ethelbert the Bear's, save that Prince Edgar's enchantment lasted for six weeks out of every seven.

And Godfrey resolved to await the day of transformation, though, as the fair Adeline had told him, six long weeks had yet to pass before the happy hour could come again.

Then Adeline took food from her store, gave it to her brother, and bade him hide in a hollow tree.

"As you love your life," she entreated him, "beware of Edgar's eagle eye. If he sees you, you are lost. He will tear you to pieces and then devour you, as he did but yesterday to three poor youths who strayed into this forest."

Godfrey trembled at the fate of the youths, promised great care, and lay hidden in the hollow tree for six long weeks. Only when the Eagle left his nest did he venture forth to embrace his sister.

And at the end of the six weeks everything happened exactly as it had happened in the Bear's cave. The Eagle was transformed into a beautiful and charming prince, his nest into a magnificent palace. For seven days there was feasting, dancing, and general rejoicing, and at the close of the seventh day Edgar the Eagle bade his brother-in-law farewell.

Then Godfrey spoke, in great sorrow:

"And must I then part from you and my beloved sister forever? Is there no way to loose the unhappy enchantment

that holds you prisoner? Had I a hundred lives to lose, I would risk them all to save you."

Edgar embraced him tenderly, and replied:

"Thanks, noble youth, for your love and friendship. Well I know there is a way to loose the enchantment, but you must not—shall not venture upon it! Give up this thought, I entreat you, for if you fail, you will surely die!"

But these words only made Godfrey the more eager for the adventure, and he urged the prince to tell him how he should begin upon it.

But he, fearing for the lad's life, would not consent to tell him.

"All that I can tell you, noble brother," he said, "is that you must find the key to open the Gate of Enchantment. If fate has willed it that you should be our deliverer, the stars will guide you on your way; if not, 'twere folly to try."

Thereupon he drew three eagle's feathers from his wallet, and gave them to the youth, saying:

"In the hour of your utmost need take these feathers, rub them between your hands, and help shall be at hand."

Then Godfrey the Marvelous left the palace hastily, for the hour of enchantment was nigh. But, when he had gone but a short way, he sat down beneath a linden-tree, that he might watch the miracle.

Now it came to pass that at daybreak a thick mist rose from the earth, and hid the palace from Godfrey's sight. And when the sun had dispersed the mist, lo! the palace was gone, and the youth found himself upon the top of a wooded cliff that looked down into a yawning abyss.

And as he gazed about him, seeking for a path into the valley, he saw in the far distance a lake whose waters sparkled in the sunlight.

Overjoyed at this discovery, he took his sword in his hand and hewed a path for himself through the dense brushwood, keeping his eyes ever fixed upon the silvery lake, for there he hoped to find his third sister, Esmeralda. All day he hacked and hewed, until his arms grew weary and his legs would

scarce support him. But toward sundown the way became clearer, and he could plainly see the waters of the lake glistening between the trees.

But when he reached the borders of the lake he was so weary that he threw himself down upon the grass and soon fell asleep; and when he awoke again the sun was already high in the heavens.

Then, refreshed by his sleep and of good cheer, he sprang up, and wandered along the shore of the lake, wondering how he might reach his sister.

In vain he cried aloud:

"Esmeralda, beloved sister, if you dwell in this lake, answer me. I am Godfrey, called the Marvelous, your brother, come hither to break the mighty enchantment that holds you in this watery prison."

Only the echoes from the forest made reply.

Then Godfrey cried to the fishes that darted to and fro in the clear water:

"Dear fishes, go tell your mistress that her brother awaits her here."

And he took all the bread-crumbs left in his satchel and threw them into the pond to bribe the fishes; and they swallowed the bread greedily, but took no heed of the giver.

Now when Godfrey saw that the fishes could not be persuaded, he took off his armor, drew his sword from its sheath, and with it leaped far into the water. Then he swam boldly into the middle of the lake, seeking for a sign of Esmeralda or the monstrous fish, her husband.

And presently, when his strength began to leave him, he espied, not far away, a thin mist rising from the water. He swam toward it, and there he saw a column of rock-crystal that jutted out above the surface of the lake. The column was hollow, and out of it there rose clouds of smoke of a very sweet smell, and Godfrey guessed that this was the chimney of Esmeralda's dwelling.

Straightway he climbed to the top and glided down the opening. Down he glided, far, far down, until all at once he found

himself in a crystal chamber where a young and lovely woman was preparing her morning chocolate.

Now, when the young woman beheld a handsome youth appearing from the chimney, she cried out in terror, let fall her pot of chocolate, and herself fell fainting to the ground.

When she opened her eyes once more, she moaned out, in a feeble voice, these words:

"O unhappy stranger, whoever you be, that darest to enter this fatal dwelling, do you not know that it is death to come here?"

But the brave youth replied:

"Fear nothing, my love. I am your brother Godfrey, called the Marvelous, come to seek my beloved sisters, and to break the enchantment that holds them. I heed neither danger nor death in this my quest."

Then Esmeralda embraced her brother tenderly, yet trembled with fear.

"Though you escaped from the Bear and the Eagle," said she, "yet the Shark, my husband, will surely devour you."

"Hide me, as your sisters did," returned Godfrey, "and I will await the period of disenchantment."

"Alas!" replied Esmeralda, "cannot you see that this dwelling is built of crystal, and that its walls are as transparent as the finest glass?"

"Surely," said the lad, "there is some corner where you can conceal me."

Then the lovely Esmeralda thought deeply, and at length she led him to the wood-cellar. And Godfrey crept under the pile of wood, while Esmeralda hurried to the audience-chamber to await the coming of Ufo the Shark.

Now, the Shark could not enter the crystal dwelling, for he would have perished for lack of water. Yet he came daily to his wife's abode, that he might gaze upon her beauty through the transparent walls.

Scarce had the beautiful Esmeralda entered the audience-chamber when the monster fish appeared.

The waters rushed and foamed about the crystal palace, and

the Shark flapped his tail and glared at Esmeralda with bulging, sea-green eyes.

Now, strive as she would, the lovely lady could not hide her terror. Her heart beat wildly; she turned first pale, then red, and trembled in every limb.

This did not escape the Shark, despite his fishy nature. With horrible grimaces he darted to and fro, and round and round the palace, lashing the waters until the crystal dwelling shook and shivered, and Esmeralda expected every moment that it would be dashed to atoms.

But the suspicious Shark had spoiled his own ends, for he had troubled the water so that he could see nothing; and finding all his staring useless, he presently swam away.

Each day the Shark returned and swam three times round the palace, spying into every nook and corner. But Godfrey lay hidden beneath the pile of wood, and the fish saw nothing at all.

At last the hour of disenchantment came. Godfrey awoke one morning to find himself in a princely palace upon a little island. And all around—houses, gardens, and market-places—seemed to be floating upon the water. In place of streets there were canals, upon which hundreds of boats glided to and fro.

And Prince Ufo the Shark welcomed his brother-in-law right heartily, and great was the rejoicing in the palace.

Now, this prince was under the enchantment for six months out of every seven, so that Godfrey could abide for one whole month with his sister.

At length the time of parting came, and Ufo took the youth aside and spoke these words:

"Return, I entreat you, to your sorrowing parents, who mourn you for dead. Do not linger by the way, but go at once, lest you perish in this enchanted spot."

But the youth replied:

"Nay, tell me what I must do to loose the enchantment."

Then the prince answered:

"You must first find the key to unlock the Gate of Enchantment before you can destroy the thing that has worked this

evil upon me and my brothers. More than this I cannot tell to you."

"I will find the magic key or perish in the quest!" cried the brave lad.

And though the prince besought him most earnestly to give up his rash adventure, he would not be persuaded.

Then Ufo the Shark took from his wallet three fish-scales, and thus he spoke:

"Do not scorn this simple gift, but in the time of your need rub the scales between your fingers, and help shall be at hand."

Thereupon Godfrey embraced his lovely sister, who wept bitterly, bade the prince farewell, and leaped into the gilded boat that lay in waiting to carry him to the shore.

Scarce had he reached the firm land when a great darkness rose up about him, and when it grew light again, the gondola, the palace, the gardens and market-places had vanished, and the youth saw nothing but a fish-pond overgrown with reeds that swayed and rustled in the morning breeze. And the lad's shield and armor lay upon the spot where he had left them as he leaped into the water three moons before, and his spear was thrust into the ground beside them.

Then Godfrey the Marvelous donned his armor, and vowed that he would neither sleep nor rest until the key of the Enchanted Gate lay in his hand.

For seven long days and nights he sought in vain. But on the eighth day he reached the summit of a high mountain, and looked down into a valley overgrown with cypress and hemlock and pine and fir trees.

And there, in the far distance, he espied what looked like a strange monument. Marveling what this might be, he descended the mountain and bent his steps toward the thing he had seen. Then he beheld two marble pillars that towered white and huge against the morning sky. And supported by the pillars, and shadowed by an arch, stood a gate of steel, stoutly guarded with bands of iron; and beyond the gate a cavern yawned, black and unfathomable, and on either hand a wall of solid rock rose up.

Close by the gate a black bull was grazing. He looked from side to side, fiercely, with glittering eyes.

"Surely this is the guardian of the Enchanted Gate," said Godfrey, and rejoiced greatly, for he knew that the adventure he sought was at hand.

Now, when the bull caught sight of the youth, a great fury seized him. He ran hither and thither, roaring lustily, stamped the ground with his feet so that great clods of soil flew into the air, and dashed his horns against the rocks, making the earth to shake and tremble.

And Godfrey the Marvelous stood on guard with drawn sword, waiting for the bull's approach, that with one brave stroke he might sever his head from his body.

And the bull ran at the youth with lowered horns. But alas! the neck of the bull was proof against steel and iron, and Godfrey's sword was shivered into fragments, so that only the hilt remained in his hand.

Now the lad had nothing left but a wooden lance, pointed with steel. And he thrust at the bull with the lance, right between the horns, but the lance broke as though it had been a reed.

Then the bull seized the youth upon his horns and threw him high into the air, meaning to trample him under foot as he fell.

But Godfrey was caught by the outspread branches of a wild pear-tree, and the bull could not reach him. Yet he butted the tree so violently with his iron forehead that it was quickly uprooted and fell to the ground with its burden.

Now, it came to pass that in his sore peril Godfrey remembered the gifts of his brothers-in-law; and he drew forth the hairs of Ethelbert and rubbed them between his fingers. No sooner had he done this than a monstrous bear appeared and rushed to attack the bull.

Fierce was the fight and long. At length the bear gained the mastery, and, crushing the bull to death, tore him to pieces. And as the bear rent the bull's ribs asunder, a gull fluttered from out of it, and, with loud cries, flew into the air.

Then Godfrey knew that, though the bull was slain, the

magic key was yet to be won. Quickly he seized the three eagle's feathers and rubbed them between his fingers.

No sooner had he done this than a mighty eagle rose high into the air and pursued the gull. Then the gull took its flight straight toward the Enchanted Lake; and the eagle swooped down and crushed it with its mighty claws. But in dying the gull dropped a golden egg into the lake.

This did not escape the eye of Godfrey. Instantly he drew forth the three fish-scales and rubbed them between his fingers. Thereupon a great shark rose from the water, caught the egg in his monstrous jaws, and spat it out upon the shore.

Then Godfrey the Marvelous took a stone and broke the golden egg, and lo! a tiny key fell out. Seizing the key, the gallant lad hastened toward the Gate of Steel.

"Surely this key is very small for this giant lock," said Godfrey the Marvelous.

Yet no sooner had the key touched the lock than it sprang open, the heavy bolts flew back, and the steel gate opened wide.

Right joyously Godfrey entered the dusky cavern, and came upon seven doors that led to seven different chambers, each splendidly furnished and lighted with hundreds of tapers.

And when he had passed through the seventh chamber he saw yet another door, and opening this, he found himself in an eighth apartment, where, asleep upon a couch, he beheld a young woman of great beauty. And as the youth gazed at her, marveling at her loveliness, he saw that she was sleeping the sleep of enchantment.

Now, when at length he removed his eyes from the young woman's face, they fell upon an alabaster tablet full of strange letters. And immediately Godfrey guessed that upon this tablet was engraved the talisman by which all the enchantments of that forest were preserved.

In sudden anger he clenched his fist, armed with the glove of mail, and struck the tablet a mighty blow. Instantly the lovely sleeper started, awoke, cast a fearful glance toward the tablet, then fell back once more into her death-like sleep. Godfrey repeated the blow, and everything happened as before.

Thereupon the youth bethought himself how he might destroy the talisman. He had neither sword nor spear, nothing but two sturdy arms. With these he seized the magic tablet and hurled it from its lofty pedestal onto the marble floor, where it broke into a hundred fragments.

At this the beautiful young woman awoke once more, and for the first time cast an eye on Godfrey the Marvelous, who sank down before her right gallantly upon one knee. But ere the lad could speak she hid her lovely face with her silken veil, and spoke, in scorn and anger, these words:

"Away, miserable sorcerer! Not even in the shape of a handsome youth can you cheat my eyes or lead my heart astray. Go hence, and leave me in the death-like sleep your magic has put upon me."

Then Godfrey, understanding her mistake, replied:

"Fair lady, do not scorn me. I am not the wizard whom you fear, but Count Godfrey, called the Marvelous. I have destroyed the talisman that held you prisoner."

At these words the lady lifted her veil a little, beheld the alabaster tablet shattered into fragments, cast her eyes upon the young prince, and found him very good to look upon. Thereupon she gave him her hand, and told him to rise from his knees, and said:

"If you have done what you say, noble knight, finish your gallant deed, I pray you, and lead me out of this dreadful cavern, that I may behold God's sunshine, if it be day, or the silvery stars, if night has fallen."

Then Godfrey gave the lady his arm, that he might guide her through the seven splendid rooms of state. He opened the door, and lo! all was black as night. The tapers were extinguished, and the crystal candlesticks no longer shed a luster from the lofty ceilings.

For hours Godfrey and the lady groped about the inky darkness. The splendidly furnished apartments had vanished, and nothing remained but seven damp and gruesome caves.

At length they espied from afar off the glimmer of daylight, and hastening toward it, found an outlet in the rocks.

And now the fair stranger cried aloud with gladness, for the scent of the pine-trees was sweet in her nostrils, and the gentle breeze played joyously with her golden tresses. And she sat down amid the bracken and bade Godfrey sit by her side. And the youth's heart glowed with love for the maiden, and he marveled who she might be, and how she had come to that enchanted spot. Then she, reading his thought, flushed rosily and spoke to him thus:

"I am Hildegarde, daughter of the great Prince Rathbod. Long ago, the giant Hornibrand desired me for his wife. My father, knowing the giant to be of evil mind, given to the practice of black magic, refused my hand. Then the giant made war against my father, slew him, seized his lands, and took me prisoner. My father dead, there was no one to defend me, for my brothers, three gallant knights, were battling in distant climes.

"And the dreadful Hornibrand carried me far away to his dominions, threatening me with awful curses if I refused to be his wife. Then I, hating him because I knew that he was my father's murderer, resolved to die rather than yield to him.

"But the wizard would not kill me, but sought to change my heart by a thousand tricks. He took me to a splendid palace and bade his servants wait upon me as their mistress, heaping costly gifts at my feet. For seven days he left me; but on the eighth day he came again to renew his suit. And still I would have none of him. Thereupon he was seized with a great fury and cried:

"'Heartless one, though you be cruel to me, be not so to your three brothers. They came hither with their armies to tear you from my grasp. They are now within my power. Consent to be my wife, and they shall instantly be freed. Refuse, and they shall be forever condemned to haunt these forests in monstrous shapes.'

"This miserable lie served but to embitter my heart still further against my enemy. I defied him with scornful words.

"'Unhappy woman!' then cried the wretch, 'your fate is

sealed. Sleep for as long as the invisible powers obey this talisman!'

"Then the earth began to tremble beneath my feet, a darkness came over the land, my senses left me, and I sank, fainting, upon my couch. You, noble knight, by destroying the talisman, have freed me from my death-like sleep. I know not by what power you have done this, nor why the sorcerer gives no sign. Surely he is dead, else would he not have permitted the destruction of his talisman to go unpunished."

Now, the lovely Hildegarde was right. The giant Hornibrand had, in his pride, made war upon a certain powerful enchantress who in knowledge of the black arts far surpassed her enemy. With magic weapons she dispersed his army and slew their leader. And at the very moment that Hildegarde was telling her story, the head of Hornibrand was bubbling in the witch's caldron.

When the fair Hildegarde had ended, Godfrey the Marvelous made haste to relate his own adventures. And the princess could not doubt that the three enchanted princes were no other than her three brothers, and that what Hornibrand had told her of their horrid fate was no lie indeed.

Scarce had Godfrey finished his tale when a great stir arose in the mountains. Then, amid trumpet-blasts and shouts of joy, three squadrons of horsemen broke through the forest, and at the head of all came the three princes, Ethelbert, Edgar, and Ufo, the brothers of Hildegarde, with their three lovely wives, Wulfhilda, Adeline, and Esmeralda, the sisters of Godfrey.

Then all the princes and princesses fell about one another's necks and wept for joy; and with beating of drums and blaring of trumpets, the cavalcade went on its way to the old castle on the edge of the forest, where the parents of Godfrey and the three princesses mourned them for dead.

Now, the old countess had not ceased to shed tears and to strew ashes on her head since Godfrey's departure.

But when she beheld, not Godfrey the Marvelous alone, but all her daughters safe and sound, with their husbands by their

side, she shook the ashes from her silver hair and shed tears of gladness.

Then was there no end to the rejoicing in the castle. And Godfrey the Marvelous took possession of the wizard's domain, and there and then wedded the lovely Hildegarde. And every one lived happily ever after.

# *The Nymph of the Well*

LONG ago, there lived a knight in a castle on the top of a steep mountain. And the knight had a beautiful and virtuous wife.

Now, at the foot of the mountain there was a grotto, and in the grotto there was a well. And the well was said to be haunted by a fairy.

This nymph, so people said, lived at the bottom of the well; and sometimes, when any great thing was about to happen at the castle, she would rise out of the water at midnight and send a white mist floating up the mountain.

And the lady of the castle, whose name was Gertrude, loved to walk by the grotto. And one day in every week she would sit at the mouth of the well to distribute alms to the poor, and the fame of her charity spread far and wide.

Now, it came about that the knight, her husband, went to war in a far country, and when he did not return, Gertrude was sad at heart.

And one night when she could not close her eyes for grief, she rose at midnight and wandered down the mountain to the little grotto.

Now, as she sat by the well, mingling her tears with the green waters, a white mist rose up, and out of the mist there came a lovely woman. She was clothed all in white gossamer, and her dripping tresses hung below her waist. The moon shone full upon her, and Gertrude knew that this was the nymph of the well.

Then she cried out in great terror:

"Oh, spirit, are you come to tell me that Amarind, my beloved husband, is slain?"

But the nymph, in a wondrously gentle voice, replied:

"Fear nothing, Gertrude, your heart is pure as the water in my well; therefore, I am your friend. Listen to the news I bring you. Your husband lives, and ere the cock crows you will see him again. Now, before the year is out, a daughter will be born to you. The stars are not unfriendly to her, but an unkind fate will rob her of a mother's care."

When the noble lady heard this, she was very sad. But the nymph said:

"Do not cry. When you are gone, I will befriend your child, on one condition: that you choose me to be her godmother. Take this pebble, and when the hour of christening is at hand, send one whom you can trust and bid her throw the pebble into this well. Say nothing of what you have seen or heard this night."

Thereupon the nymph embraced Gertrude tenderly, wrapped herself in mist, and vanished down the well as suddenly as she had come.

Then everything fell out as the nymph had foretold.

The brave Amarind returned from the wars; and within the year a daughter was born, fair as the morning.

There was great rejoicing at the castle, and people were bidden to the christening feast from far and wide.

And on the day of the feast, Gertrude summoned a faithful maid, and bade her take the pebble the nymph had given her and throw it into the well.

The maid did as she was told, and before she had time to reach the castle again, a strange lady entered the chamber where all the guests were assembled, and, when the child was brought in, took her place among the godfathers and godmothers.

And every one looked in amazement at the beautiful stranger; she was clad in flowing robes of silk that shimmered now blue, now green; and ropes of pearls worth a king's ransom hung about her neck and waist. A brilliant sapphire held her long gossamer veil; but the ends of the veil were wet, as though they had trailed in the water.

And every one wondered who the stranger might be. And when the godfathers and godmothers showed their gifts to the child, all eyes looked toward the lovely lady, thinking she had surely brought a gift of great value. But she had nothing but a tiny wooden ball. This she laid upon the child's cradle, and having kissed the mother, she left the room as quietly as she had come.

Then there was much whispering and laughing among the guests, and they mocked at the stranger and her paltry gift. But the mother said nothing of what she knew, and locked the ball away in her jewel-box.

Now, when the child, who had been named Gertrude, after her mother, was barely out of swaddling clothes, the nymph's words came true—the lady of the castle fell sick and died. And so swift was her death that she had no time to think of the nymph's present, so the ball of wood remained locked up in her jewel-case.

Then the knight mourned bitterly for his lady; and when the period of mourning was at an end, he married another wife.

But the second wife was vain and cruel. She wasted the knight's money on fine clothes, and gave her little step-daughter into the care of his servants, not caring what became of the child.

Now, one day she broke open the jewel-case that had belonged to the former wife, and saw the little wooden ball among a great store of gems. So she took the precious stones, but threw the ball out of window as a thing of no value.

But the little Gertrude was sitting in the garden, playing with her dolls, and the ball came rolling to her feet. And the child took the ball, and was mightily pleased with the new toy. And that same day the nurse walked with her charge to the foot of the mountain; and, the sun being fierce in the sky, sought shelter by the cool shade of the well.

Presently the child grew hungry. Now, the nurse had forgotten the bread and honey she should have brought with her.

So she went into the bushes to gather blackberries, while the child played with her wooden ball. And as she was throwing the ball this way and that, all at once it rolled into the well.

Instantly a young and lovely woman rose from the water, took the child in her arms, and began to fondle and caress her with such soothing words that the little one was not afraid.

"See, here is your toy that fell into my well," she said. "I am your godmother, my child, and I loved your mother dearly. I promised her to befriend you, and I will keep my promise. Come hither as often as you like, little one, and whenever you want me throw a pebble into this well and I will come to you. But this ball you must never play with again. Guard it well, for it is very precious. One day it will grant you five wishes. When you are older I will tell you more."

When she had said this, the nurse returned and the nymph vanished.

Now, Gertrude was a wise child for her years. She said nothing to the nurse of what had happened, but when she was alone she found needle and cotton and sewed the wooden ball into the lining of her dress.

From that day the child lost no chance of going to the grotto and meeting her beautiful godmother. And the nymph taught her everything a maid ought to know; so that when, as the years went by, the child grew up into a lovely young woman, she was both wise and good.

Now, one day, when Gertrude went down to the well, she found the nymph very woeful, and when Gertrude asked why she was so sad, the nymph cried bitterly and said:

"My child, I have sad tidings for you. Before the corn in yonder meadow is ripe for the reaper you will be homeless and fatherless. Listen. When the maids go forth to draw water from my well, and return with empty pails, prepare for a great disaster. Guard well the ball I have given you, and do not waste your wishes. This is the last time we meet here in this grotto."

Then the nymph taught Gertrude some magic powers which the ball possessed, embraced her fondly, and vanished.

And before the harvest was ripe the words of the nymph came true. One day at eventide the maids went forth to draw water from the well, and returned with empty pitchers, pale and trembling in every limb. The White Lady, they said, was sitting by the well, sobbing and sighing and wringing her hands, and this surely boded some terrible misfortune.

Gertrude said nothing, for the nymph had bidden her be silent. She sat in her chamber trembling, and waited for what was to come.

Now, her father's second wife had spent all the knight possessed, so that he was forced at length to make war upon a neighbor's castle, as many noble knights did in those days, hoping to conquer his foe and carry off his money-bags.

But the neighbor gained the victory, killed the knight, put his men to flight, and stormed the castle; then he slew every one he found therein, man and woman alike.

But Gertrude took the magic ball, turned it three times in her hand, and spoke the words her godmother had taught her:

" Behind me, night,
Before me, day ;
Let me depart,
Unseen, away."

Straightway she became invisible, and fled, unnoticed, through the throng of armed men, out of the castle, down the mountain, on and on, until her feet would carry her no farther. Then she sank down on the grass and, looking back, beheld the castle wrapped in flames. At that her tears fell fast, for now she knew that the nymph's words had come true.

At daybreak next morning, finding that the magic spell had passed, and she was once more visible, she set off again, until she came to a village. There a kind peasant woman gave her a loaf of bread and a bowl of milk, and Gertrude begged the woman to take her fine clothes and exchange them for

a dress of coarse country fashion, and this the woman did, too.

Then Gertrude resolved to take what work she could find to do, but for a long time she could get nothing, for she had no character to show, and no one would trust a strange young woman.

At last she came to the house of Count Conrad, called the Light of Heart.

Now, the dame who kept his house for him had so bad a temper that no servant would stay with her for long, and it chanced on the day that Gertrude came to the house every one of the maids had run away, so Dame Jemima was at her wits' end what to do.

Now, Gertrude had padded her shoulders to hide her lovely form, smeared her face and hands with soot, and hidden her silken tresses beneath an ugly kerchief, so that she was a sorry sight to behold.

"Who are you?" asked Dame Jemima.

And the maid replied:

"Gertrude is my name. My parents are dead, and I want to earn an honest living."

"H'm! What can you do?" demanded the dame.

"Listen, I pray you," said Gertrude:

"I can boil and roast,
And grill and toast,
And scour and scrub,
And wipe and rub.
I can patch and I can darn,
Sew and spin and weave the yarn,
Chop the wood and make the fire,
Milk the cows and clean the byre,
Ever ready, never tire;
Willing work for modest hire."

"A pack of lies of course," said Dame Jemima, but she engaged Gertrude for all that.

And the maid was as good as her word. She worked cheerfully from sunrise to sunset and even later, and there was no

work too mean or too hard for her; in fact, there was nothing at all she could not or would not do.

So the dame became less bad-tempered day by day; and, though she found fault all the time, having grown into the way of it with former maids, and though she sometimes threw plates and dishes at Gertrude's head, having got into that way also, she never beat her with the carpet-beater or prodded her with the toasting-fork as she had done with the others.

Now it came about that the moment Gertrude set eyes upon Count Conrad, her master, she fell head over ears in love with him. There was nothing strange in that, for the Count was the handsomest young man she had ever seen; so tall and so manly, with such blue eyes and such waving hair and such a great ostrich feather in his hat.

But he had no eyes at all for the poor kitchen-wench, with her humped shoulders and her sooty face.

But one day the king of that country gave a great ball, and all the bravest knights and all the fairest ladies were bidden from far and wide. And Count Conrad was among the honored guests.

When Gertrude heard this she resolved to go to the ball at all costs. So that same night, when she had finished her work and all was quiet in the house, she went to her chamber and washed the soot from her face and hands, and took the hump from her back.

Then she drew forth the wooden ball the nymph had given her and spun it in her hand as the nymph had shown her, saying:

" Dear ball,
On you
I call
To do
Your duty ;
I need—
Oh, yes
Indeed -
A dress -
A beauty ! "

No sooner were the words out of her mouth than Gertrude heard a rustling, and then, hey, presto! the most beautiful dress in the world lay at her feet—it might have fallen from the ceiling or sprung from the floor, Gertrude could not have told which.

The dress fitted her like a glove, and she looked so lovely in it that she clapped her hands for joy and nearly woke up Dame Jemima, who was already snoring in her bed.

Then she turned the magic ball three times in her hand, and said:

"Behind me, night,
Before me, day;
Let me depart,
Unseen, away."

She flew invisible through the streets and arrived at the palace just when the ball was at its merriest.

And then—oh, the staring and whispering and wondering there was among the other guests! Every one of the men said she was the most beautiful maiden in the ball-room, and every one of the women had to own that she was the most magnificently dressed.

And Count Conrad was among the first to do her homage. He no sooner looked at her than he fell head over ears in love with her; and he burned with curiosity to know who the lovely stranger might be.

But though she danced with him most graciously, and answered his looks with maidenly smiles and blushes, not one word could Conrad learn as to who she was or whence she came.

The love-sick knight would hardly leave her side, and it was almost morning before she found a chance of slipping out of the ball-room. Then she drew forth her wooden ball, murmured the magic verse, and returned unnoticed to her attic.

On the next night there was another ball at the palace, and everything fell out as on the day before.

Gertrude wished herself another dress, and this was still more beautiful and still more costly than the first. So when she appeared at the ball she was even lovelier than the night before.

Then Count Conrad could contain himself no longer, but there and then he asked the lovely stranger to be his bride. Gertrude listened modestly to what he had to say, then made answer:

"You speak rashly, noble knight. Your words, I will not deny it, are pleasing in my ears; yet how am I to believe them true? I am a stranger to you. You know not who I am or whence I came. Do you, then, choose your bride so lightly?"

"Fair unknown!" cried the knight, "so perfect a face and form as yours can harbor no ill. Though I know neither your name nor whence you come, yet I know you to be as good and wise as you are beautiful. Were you the daughter of the humblest servant in this palace, yet would I gladly choose you for wife."

When Gertrude heard these words she trembled with joy, for she loved Count Conrad with all her heart. But she desired to prove his love; and when he would have kissed her she drew back and said:

"Nay, Sir Knight, you are overbold. I have given you no promise."

Thereupon the knight answered:

"Cruel one, do you doubt me still? Then will I prove to you that I am true and honest. In three days from now will I give a great feast in your honor. All my friends and neighbors, the best in the land, shall be bidden to the feast to witness our betrothal. Meanwhile, I give you this ring in token of my true love."

So saying, he placed upon her finger a diamond ring of great value. Gertrude kept the ring, but as to the betrothal-feast she would say him neither yea nor nay.

At daybreak she contrived to slip away unseen as before. But Conrad, the Light of Heart, never doubted that she would come to the betrothal-feast.

And that same day the count called Dame Jemima and bade her prepare a splendid banquet. Then was there a great stir and clatter in the house. All day and all night long the maids were in the kitchen roasting the fowls and baking the pasties. And Gertrude worked harder than all the rest, and was glad of heart, for she knew that it was for her the feast was prepared.

Now, at the appointed hour the noble guests arrived from far and wide. Count Conrad stood at the door looking for his bride, but the time went by and she did not come.

At length, when the hour for the feast was long past, the knight was forced to give the signal for the banquet to be served; and, when all the guests were seated, one chair remained vacant. And every one wondered who the absent guest might be.

So the hours went by, and Conrad, the host, lost all lightness of heart, and could not hide his vexation.

The guests, though he strove with forced gaiety to entertain them, did not fail to observe his ill humor, and became silent.

At length the evening grew so doleful that every one was glad when the time for parting came.

And Conrad went to his chamber, sick and sore, and tossed all night on his couch, sleeping never a wink in his sorrow and despair.

And in the morning, when his servants entered the chamber, they found the knight in a fever, sick unto death.

Then many physicians of note were summoned to his bedside. But though they looked terribly wise, and wrote out prescriptions by the yard, none could tell what ailed the patient.

And Count Conrad turned his back upon them, and would not swallow their potions, but begged them to leave him to die in peace without their help.

For seven days the knight gave himself up to his secret sorrow, which so preyed upon him that the fire faded from his eyes and the roses from his cheeks, and his breath came and went as the breath of one on the edge of the grave.

On the eighth day Gertrude, as was her custom, went to

Dame Jemima for her orders, and found the dame sobbing bitterly.

"O Gertrude!" she cried, as the tears rolled down her leathern cheeks, "before the cock crows again we shall have lost our good master! The physicians say that he will not outlive this day."

When Gertrude heard this, her heart misgave her; then, taking courage, she said:

"Do not be afraid, mistress. Our master will recover. I have had a wondrous dream this night."

Then the dame bade her speak, for she had great faith in dreams.

"I dreamed," said Gertrude, "I was at home again with my mother, and she took me aside and taught me to prepare the soup of nine herbs that cures all diseases.

"If your master takes but three spoonfuls of this soup," said she, "he will not die, but will instantly be healed of his sickness."

At this the dame was beside herself with joy.

"Go at once!" she cried. "Prepare your soup, and I will persuade our master to taste it."

Then Gertrude prepared a bowl of chicken broth, in which she put all manner of delicate herbs and essences; and, last of all, she put in the diamond ring which Count Conrad had given her.

Now, the knight feared Dame Jemima's tongue, so that he was persuaded to taste a spoonful of the soup.

And when he dipped in his spoon, he felt a hard substance in the bottom of the bowl. He fished it out, and there lay his diamond betrothal-ring.

Instantly his eyes grew bright and his cheeks red, and he drank the bowl of soup in a single gulp; then, seeing their master well and hearty, Dame Jemima and the servants about his bed cried out joyfully, and they believed it was the soup that had worked this miracle, for the count had taken care that no one but himself should see the ring.

"Tell me quickly," then cried he, "who has prepared this

divine broth that puts new life into my veins and new strength into my limbs?"

And the dame replied:

"It is a young maid who serves in your kitchen."

"Send her to me this instant," said Conrad, "that I may thank her, for she has snatched me from the grave."

"Pardon, good master," returned the dame, "I fear the sight of the wench would displease you, for she is humpbacked and her face and hands are smeared with soot."

"Nay," said the knight, "do as I tell you."

When Gertrude entered the sick-chamber, Conrad dismissed his servants, for he wished to speak with the maid alone.

"Come hither, little maid," said he, "and tell me truly who gave you this ring that I found in the soup you prepared for me."

Then Gertrude made answer modestly, with downcast eyes:

"Noble master, I will tell you. It was you yourself who gave me the ring in token of your undying love. I warned you to do nothing rashly. Now that you know me for what I am, are you still of a mind to wed with me?"

At these words the knight became much disturbed. He did not believe that this kitchen-maid was the lovely stranger with whom he had danced at the ball. He suspected that the fair unknown had sent the girl to cure him of his passion; therefore he replied:

"If you are really she I seek, and can assume once more the beauteous shape and fair face that haunts my memory, then will I keep my pledge. But if you cannot do this, then will I have you punished as you deserve, until you tell me how you came by this ring."

"Alas!" answered the maid, "is it only a fair face and form you seek? 'Tis but a perishable thing, and, when age or illness bow the back and twist the shapely limbs, when the roses and lilies bloom no more, and the fine skin grows wrinkled, what will then become of your boasted love?"

Then the knight wondered that a kitchen-wench could talk so wisely, and said:

"Beauty wins a man's love; but when beauty fades, then do virtue and wisdom keep it steadfast."

Thereupon he called the dame, and ordered her to lead the maid to her chamber that she might clothe herself cleanly and decently, and to watch outside her door until she should come forth again.

Then he rose, dressed himself, and awaited the maid's coming.

When his patience was well-nigh spent the door opened, there was a rustling of silken garments, and lo! Gertrude stood before him in the gown she had last worn at the ball, fair as the morning, graceful as a fawn, with lilies and roses on her cheeks.

Then was the knight beside himself with joy, and, falling on his knees before her, he cried:

"Goddess or mortal, whoever you be, behold me at your feet. Now shall the holiest vows unite us, if you consent to accept my heart and hand."

"I am no goddess," said she, "but Gertrude, daughter of the brave knight Amarind. An evil fate robbed me of both my parents, and I was compelled to earn my bread with bitter tears in a strange country."

Then she told him all her story, hiding nothing from him—not even the secret of the magic ball.

And straightway Conrad ordered the wedding-feast, and the lovely Gertrude became his bride.

# *Prince Hedgehog*[1]

ONCE upon a time there was an emperor and an empress who for many years had been childless. One day the empress wished for a son, were he no bigger than a hedgehog. The proverb says, "What one wishes for, that one gets," and so it was with her, for she shortly gave birth to a son who looked exactly like a hedgehog and was covered all over with sharp spines.

Far and wide the news was spread abroad through the world, and the parents were much ashamed of such a son. Nevertheless, they had him educated in all useful knowledge, and he had so clever a head that by the time he was fourteen he knew all knowledge through and through.

By this time his parents could no longer endure him near them, and they assigned to him a great forest as a place of abode, feeling certain that he would then fall a prey to a wolf or a fox or some sort of a beast. They strictly commanded him not to return before the expiration of seven years. They gave him permission, however, to take with him anything that he especially cared for; but he would take nothing whatever except a sow and a great cock upon which he was wont to ride. With these he went away into the forest.

Year out, year in, Prince Hedgehog remained in the forest, and he raised so many swine that at last they were too many for even him to count. Finally he thought to himself, "My seven years are up; I will go back home." So he quickly gathered his swine together and drove them to the city of his parents.

When they perceived afar off the immense drove of swine, they thought, "Here comes a wealthy swine-drover." But

[1] *From "The Russian Grandmother's Wonder Tales." Copyright, 1906, by Charles Scribner's Sons*

soon they recognized their son, who was riding upon his cock behind the swine and making straight for the imperial castle. So they received him into the castle and showed him the best of hospitality, dividing his swine among different pens, for they filled every swine-pen in the city.

While they were at table they asked their son how he enjoyed himself in the forest, and said that if he wished to go back there they would give him a goat this time. But he declared that he was not going back, for he had made up his mind to marry.

The astonished parents replied, "Why, what maiden would love you and take you for a husband?" The poor youth knew no answer to this question, so he mounted his cock and rode sadly away.

Now the parents thought he would never come back again. But he was a clever fellow, and he went as a suitor to the king of a neighboring country who had three unmarried daughters.

When he found himself near the city the cock flew up with him to the window of the room in which guests were assembled enjoying themselves. The cock crowed with all his might, until the chamberlain went to the window and asked what he wanted. The Hedgehog answered, "I come a-wooing."

Then the king permitted him to come into the room, and offered him the welcome-cup, according to ancient manner and custom. Then the king again asked him what business brought him, and Hedgehog, the imperial prince, answered him shortly and to the point, "I come a-wooing."

The king immediately assured him that he had only to choose one of the three unmarried daughters. The Hedgehog chose the youngest, but she would not have him for a husband until her father threatened to have her banished unless she gave a cheerful consent.

She saw no help for it, and thought to herself: "I can never get out of this scrape; come what may, I'll take him. We have gold and treasure in abundance, and we shall easily get along through life."

When the Hedgehog had received her consent he went back to his parents and told them what had happened to him. His parents would not believe him, and sent the chamberlain to inquire if it was true that the emperor's son, the Hedgehog, was to marry the king's daughter. When the chamberlain returned and told the emperor that his son had spoken the truth, the emperor ordered his horses to be harnessed, and went with his wife to visit the king, riding in their carriage, while their son rode behind on his cock.

When they arrived they found everything ready for the wedding. But, according to custom, the bridal party were obliged to go to the church a few days before the marriage to pray and confess to the priest. When the young lady came to confession she asked the priest how she might manage to get rid of the prince and not be obliged to marry him.

The priest gave her a sound scolding, and said in conclusion: "Just keep quiet and all will end well. Mark what I say, and remember it well. When you are come into the church and are taking your place in the sacristy, do you follow close behind the others. When you get to the high altar sprinkle your bridegroom thrice with holy-water, and be careful to prick yourself each time with one of his spines. Then three drops of blood will trickle out of your hand, and you must let these also fall upon him."

After confession the bridal pair went home to breakfast. The next day—it was a Sunday—the bridal party went at half past eleven into the church, and the bride did in every respect as the priest had counseled.

And, behold, the Hedgehog was transformed into a beautiful youth whose like was not to be found in all the world. Then the bridal party sat down upon the benches and heard mass, and the priest united them and preached them a sermon how they should cleave to each other all their lives long.

After that they went back to the house, and the wedding-feast lasted until late in the night.

# *The Woodcutter's Daughter*

THERE was once a poor woodcutter, very miserable, though prudent and industrious; he had a wife and three grown-up sons, yet their united labors scarcely sufficed for bread. No hope appeared of improving his lot, when he was one day fortunate enough to save the life of his master when attacked by robbers in the forest.

This master was not ungrateful; he desired the woodcutter to repair to him on the following day in order to receive a reward. The poor man did not fail, hoping to gain two or three crowns; for it appeared so natural to defend an unarmed man that he attached little value to his services, considering his own danger not worth a thought. He put on his best array, shaved, and made many reverences to the porter and the numerous lackeys previous to an introduction to the master, who was much more polite than the valets.

"Well, Thomas," said he, "how can I recompense what you have done for me? Without your assistance I should have perished; and as my life is a very happy one, I value it accordingly."

Poor Thomas was at a loss how to reply; he stammered out, "My Lord—your Grace," but could get no farther.

The master, in order to relieve the poor man, interrupted him thus: "I understand better than yourself, perhaps, what would suit you; I would not wish to draw you from your native condition, for I believe that none is more truly happy; but I present to you and your children's children, in perpetuity, the cottage which you inhabit in the forest. You and they shall have the power of cutting as much wood every year as you can use; you shall work for yourself; and if your sons like to hunt,

all the game which they kill shall be for their own use. I only exact that you sell nothing, and that, while possessing every comfort, you seek not to quit your peaceful obscurity."

Thomas was so astonished that he could find no words to express his gratitude. He came home to his wife, who heartily shared his joy. The sons immediately set off for a large supply of fagots, and made a great fire; but when they had been thoroughly warmed, Mother Thomas began to say what a pity it was that they could make no use of all the wood which was not burned.

"An idea has just struck me," replied the husband; "our master gives us all we can *use;* these are his own words,—very well; I shall be able to use enough to bring us in a pretty little income!"

"How?" said his wife.

"When I was a boy," rejoined the woodcutter, "my father taught me to make wooden shoes, and I made them so light and so neat that they were everywhere sought for. What need now prevent me from exercising this trade? James shall cut wood in the forest, Peter shall kill game for dinner, and Paul, who has not the least brains of the three, shall go to sell my merchandise at the neighboring town. This will be a public benefit, by enabling the poor about us to dress with more decency and comfort, and it will also serve to furnish our own cottage, of which we shall make a little palace."

The boys, who were present, highly relished this idea. Mother Thomas, who was rather inclined to gluttony, made the most of the game which Peter provided. A little labor, good cheer, a blazing fire, and perfect family concord, rendered this family the happiest in the world. The master came to the cottage, and seeing them so united and industrious, encouraged the trade of the wooden shoes, which increased their comforts without exposing them to the vices attendant on avarice and luxury.

But happiness such as this seldom remains permanent. A flock of furious wolves appeared in the forest; every day they devoured either helpless children or travelers; they tore up the

roots of the trees, attacking even one another, while their wild howlings were heard night and day in the cottage of the wood-cutter.

Mother Thomas would no longer suffer her boys to leave home; and when they did go in spite of her, she remained watching at the door, refusing either to eat or drink until they returned.

Such a situation was deplorable; but at length the young men, who were very brave, resolved to deliver themselves and their master. Taking arms, in case they should be attacked, they went into the forest and dug deep pits, covering them with a little earth, laid over some branches of trees; and during this heavy labor, which lasted several days, they lighted great fires around them, in order to hinder the wolves from approaching.

Success crowned their enterprise, for in returning to the spot at sunrise, they perceived that one of the pits had been broken into during the night, and that it was now quite uncovered. They charged their muskets, and each was disputing the honor of first firing, when they heard issue from the depths below a mild and supplicating voice imploring assistance.

"What shall we do?" said Peter; "assuredly that is not the roaring of a wolf; it is, perhaps, some unfortunate little wandering child. How lucky that we did not draw the trigger!"

They approached, and distinguished a beautiful lady, richly dressed, wearing on her head a cluster of diamonds, which shone like a star. She appeared very young, and was trembling with cold. Much rain had fallen during the night, and her robe, of silver gauze, was dabbled in mud and water; her fair and tender hands were all dirty, which seemed to vex her even more than the dangers she had experienced. She continued, however, to struggle and to make signs for relief, when three enormous wolves appeared at a distance. The brothers looked at each other expressively, like people who feel that all is lost, but who resolve to do their duty. They had a cord about them, which Peter fastened round his body, and let himself down into the pit. He took the beautiful lady on his shoulders, while his

brothers assisted in drawing them up. They then stretched her on the grass, for she had fainted; and now the wolves had just reached them,—when, lo! these beasts of prey were instantly turned into three little lambs, and licked the feet of the lady, who slowly returned to life.

"My good lads," said she to the woodcutters, "fear nothing. From henceforth no more dangerous animals than these shall trouble you. But I owe you a still greater recompense; lead me to your father; I wish to felicitate him on the generosity and bravery of his sons."

The poor youths were so astonished by this adventure that they felt unable to reply; but they respectfully lifted her long train from the ground, it having now recovered all its splendor.

The three lambs followed, skipping and frolicking before them—they seemed to know the way; and Mother Thomas, who sat at the door looking out for her children, was not a little surprised to behold their companion.

She had, however, presence of mind to invite her noble guest to enter and rest; much ashamed of having nothing better to offer than a straw chair, and some spring-water, which was in a very clean pitcher on the dresser.

"I shall willingly rest an hour with you," said the lady. "Although you now see me for the first time, I am one of your best friends, of which I shall give you a proof. I accept a glass of water, on condition that your husband and children will also pledge me."

A glance of Mother Thomas's eye directed her family; they each sought their ordinary drinking-cup, which was of wood, and then bent the neck of the pitcher; but what was their astonishment to perceive the vessel turn into wrought-silver in their hands, and to taste, instead of water, a liquor so delicious, that when the woodcutter and his wife had drunk, they felt themselves ten years younger than before!

They threw themselves at the feet of the beautiful lady, in terror; for a natural instinct made them feel that great power is always more or less to be dreaded, even when employed in acts of beneficence. The lady meanwhile kindly raised them,

and having spoken of the courage and generosity of their sons, who exposed themselves to the fury of wolves rather than take flight and abandon her, she said that her name was the Fairy Coquette, and that she would willingly relate her history.

"Previously, madam," said the woodcutter, "will you have the goodness to tell me what is a fairy? During thirty years that I have inhabited this forest, I have heard of the devil, of the Were wolf, of the monster of Gévaudan, but never have I heard of fairies."

"We exist, notwithstanding," replied Coquette, "but not in all ages, nor in all countries. We are supernatural beings, to whom has been imparted a portion of supernatural power, which we make use of for good or evil, according to our natural disposition; in that alone consists our resemblance to men."

The woodcutter, who was very simple, understood little of this explanation; but, like many others, had a profound respect for what he could not comprehend. He bowed down to the ground, and only requested the fairy to inform him why a supernatural being, so highly gifted, could have fallen into a pit prepared for wolves.

"It is," replied Coquette, "because I have an enemy still more powerful than myself, the Enchanter Barabapatapouf, the most wicked ogre in the world; he has but three teeth, three hairs, one eye, and is fifteen feet high. With all these charms he happened to fall in love with me, and merely for mischief I affected to accept him. He then invited his friends to the nuptials; when, to his great mortification, I took them to witness that I would never be the wife of such a monster. Barabapatapouf was deeply incensed, swore to be revenged, and has never lost an opportunity of keeping his word. I should have remained three days in that horrible pit but for the generosity of your children."

"They have done nothing more than their duty," replied the woodcutter.

"I must also do mine," said Coquette, "but my power is limited. I can satisfy but two wishes, and it is necessary that each

of you should choose freely, unbiased by the others. You must separate accordingly, and to-morrow, at early dawn, come to inform me what you have all resolved on during the night."

Mother Thomas was very uneasy in thinking how she could accommodate the fairy, for neither her children's beds nor her own were worthy of offering to such a grand lady; but Coquette desired her to feel at ease, as she would provide everything needful. She then drew forth some grains of sand, which she scattered on the floor. Instantly there arose on the spot a bed of rose-leaves three feet high; the bolster was of violets, heartsease and orange flowers, all breathing delicious perfumes; and the counterpane, entirely composed of butterflies' wings, exhibited colors so brilliant and varied that one could never be weary of examining it. The three lambs which had followed the fairy lay down at her feet, and as the room was rather damp, they gently warmed it with their breath, with a care and intelligence almost human. The woodcutter and his sons felt so surprised at all these wonders that they imagined themselves dreaming. Coquette warned Mother Thomas that if she should speak once to her husband before she again saw her, the wishes could not be realized. The strictest injunctions were indeed necessary to prevent their communicating on a subject which interested both so deeply. When day appeared, Coquette summoned them to her presence.

The woodcutter first came, and said, with his usual simplicity, that he never could have believed it so difficult to form a wish. Till that moment he had considered himself happy, but now finding it possible to obtain one thing, he desired a thousand. Wearied with the fatigue of thought, he had fallen asleep without coming to a determination; but seeing in his dreams five purses filled with gold, it seemed as if one were for him, one for his wife, and one for each of his children.

"Well," said the Coquette, "these purses are apparently your desire; go then to the bin where you deposit your bread, and you will find them. Only say how many pounds you wish them to contain."

"Oh, if there were but a hundred pounds in each," replied

Thomas, "that would be sufficient to extend our little commerce, and send our wooden shoes to China itself."

"Your wish is accomplished," said the fairy; "go away, and permit your wife to come in her turn."

The good dame had also passed a sleepless night, and had never before been so much agitated or so unhappy; sometimes she wished for riches, and then thought riches would not prevent her from dying—so she had better wish that she might live a hundred years. Now one idea filled her mind, now another; it seemed as if the fairy should have given her at least a month to deliberate. At last she suddenly said: "Madam Fairy, I am very old, and what I desire most is a daughter, to assist me in household management and to keep me company; my husband almost lives in the woods and leaves me at break of day; my sons also go about their business; we are without neighbors, and I have nobody to speak to."

"Be it so," said the fairy; "you shall have the prettiest daughter imaginable, and she shall speak from her birth, in order that no time may be lost. Call your husband and sons; I hope to find all parties content."

The little family assembled, but harmony was not the result of their communications. The young men thought their father's wish quite pitiful, and the woodcutter by no means relished the idea of another child. The fairy, however, provided an excellent breakfast, and the wine reanimated his spirits.

"Now I promise," said Coquette, "that you shall have a daughter, who at the moment of her birth will be endowed with the figure and the intelligence of twelve years old. Call her Rose, for her complexion shall shame the flower which bears that name."

"And *I* pronounce that she shall also be as black as ebony, and become, before the age of fifteen, the wife of a great king," said a very strong voice in clear and distinct accents, accompanied by shouts of laughter, which evidently proceeded from a great pitcher placed at the corner of the chimney.

The Fairy Coquette turned pale, and consternation was gen-

eral; but the woodcutter, now merry with wine, joined in the laugh. "Ah! how droll," said he, "red and black roses! A likely story, indeed, that a great king would come a-wooing to a woodcutter's daughter! Only a pitcher could invent such nonsense, and I shall teach it to utter no more."

Thus saying, he gave the pitcher a great kick and broke it in pieces; when there issued from it a smoke thick and black, and so stifling that Coquette was obliged to use two bottles of essence to dissipate its noxious effects.

"Ah, cruel Barabapatapouf!" cried she, "must your malignity then extend even to those whom I wish to benefit? I indeed recognize my enemy," said she to the woodcutter; "beware of him, and believe that it is with no good intention he destines your daughter for the bride of a king. Some mystery is here concealed, foreboding evil."

Every one was rendered quite melancholy by this adventure, and Coquette, beginning to weary of these poor foresters, opened the window and disappeared.

A great quarrel then arose between the woodcutter and his sons, who, forgetting that respect in which they had never before failed, reproached him for losing an opportunity of rendering them all happy. "We might," said they, "have purchased estates, finery of all kinds, and been as rich and noble as many who now despise us. One or two millions would have been as easily said as five hundred pounds; that sum would obtain a marquisate for my father, and baronies for each of us. What extraordinary stupidity our parents have shown in this matter!"

"My children," said the woodcutter, "are these things, then, necessary for happiness? It appeared to me that you were well satisfied when our master only made our poverty a little less oppressive; and now, while you have more gold than you ever saw in your lives, one would suppose that you had been deeply injured, and could never know contentment more."

As for Mother Thomas, she was wiser, and so well pleased with the idea of her daughter that her imagination roamed no farther. In course of time she gave birth to an infant; but

scarcely had it seen the light than it glided from her arms, and started up to the stature of a well-formed girl of twelve or thirteen years old, who made a low courtesy to the woodcutter, kissed the hand of her mother, and offered her brothers a cordial embrace. But these lads ill-naturedly repulsed the young stranger; they felt jealous, fearing that she would now be preferred to them.

Rose, one might say, was born dressed, for flowing ringlets fell around her shoulders, forming a complete covering; and with her increase of size appeared a little smart petticoat and brown bodice in peasant fashion. Her delicate feet were clad in wooden shoes, but both the foot and the shoe were so shapely that any lady in the land might have been proud to exhibit them. Her little plump hand was so white that it hardly appeared formed for rustic labors, yet she immediately prepared to assist in household matters, and the poor old dame was never weary of caressing such a charming child.

A bed was prepared for Rose beside her mother. This good girl arose at dawn to prepare the young men's breakfast; for she had an excellent natural disposition, and so much intelligence that she seemed to know by instinct that her birth was displeasing to them, and sought to gain their regard by good-natured attentions.

Mother Thomas soon rose likewise, and returned to the kitchen. But what was her horror on beholding her daughter's face black as ebony, her hair woolly and crisped like a negro's! As there was no mirror in the cottage, Rose could not understand what had so alarmed her mother; she asked if she had involuntarily had the misfortune to give offense?

"No, no," said the old dame, weeping; "shouldst thou remain all thy life as black as ink, I shall not love thee less; but I cannot without pain recall thy beauties of yesterday. Thou wilt be laughed at; and us too. Still, we will keep thee—thou must never leave us."

Rose readily promised she never would. But when her brothers returned, they considered the change in her quite as a matter of course. They recollected the prediction of the

pitcher, and seemed quite delighted to think that, since it was fulfilled in the first instance, they might yet become the brothers of a queen.

Meanwhile they lived on better terms with Rose, hoping that one day she might be of service to them. Far from listening to the counsels of their father, they endeavored to awaken in her mind the seeds of ambition; and in order to further views interested and selfish, flattered her beauty, her talents, and her sense, rendering the future queen the most respectful homage, which diverted her exceedingly.

But, strange to say, Rose was not always black; every second day she recovered her natural beauty, from whence it might be concluded that the influence of the fairy and the Enchanter Barabapatapouf operated alternately. The woodcutter's family grew gradually accustomed to these successions; and as habit reconciles people to all things, each color became indifferent to them.

Thomas was too old to change his mode of life; he would not hear of going to live in town, although they had money sufficient for that purpose; he also still continued the making of wooden shoes. Those which Rose wore in winter were trimmed with lamb's wool, which she wrought very dexterously; she was clever and ingenious, but, it must be confessed, a little imperious; and was sometimes surprised sighing like a person indulging in visionary wishes, and languishing under some secret chagrin.

A year passed: Rose grew tall, and her brothers, weary of waiting for an event so uncertain as her marriage with a king, executed a crime which they had long meditated. Seeing that their father had touched but one of the purses, they easily obtained possession of the rest, and rising with the dawn, all three departed, saying, to satisfy their consciences, that these purses must be finally theirs, and that they would, meanwhile, turn them to advantage. When they should become very rich, they would come back to their parents and take care of their latter days. Each of them made a belt, in which he concealed his gold; and with perfect concord, more frequently found

among knaves than honest men, they traveled a hundred leagues in eight days.

The woodcutter and his wife did not at first comprehend the extent of their misfortune. They thought their children must have gone astray in the forest, and the old man wandered everywhere in search of them. But when he observed the loss of the purses, the truth was revealed, and he felt ready to die with grief. "Cursed gold!" cried he, "thou hast corrupted my brave and honest boys; they were poor, but virtuous; they are now become villains, and will meet punishment from either man or God!"

Thus saying, he took the remaining purse, and flung it into the bottom of a well. Mother Thomas was vexed, but dared not speak, for the unfortunate man was so much irritated and troubled that he would have beaten her.

When his reason cleared a little, however, he felt that he had committed an error in parting with his money, they being both old and unable to work as formerly. The dame sold some articles which had been purchased during their prosperity. But poverty was nothing; it was the conduct of their sons which inflicted the bitter sting. How was this then augmented, when some officers of justice arrived, and announced that James, Peter, and Paul had been arrested. It seemed that while drinking together in a public-house, they had spread on a table all their gold. The host surprised them, and not believing that young peasants, so coarsely clothed and wearing wooden shoes, could lawfully be in possession of such a sum, he had given them in charge. The poor boys, quite terrified, related the story of the Fairy Coquette; but as the magistrate had never seen a fairy, he did not believe one word of their fanciful narrative.

Having then no hope but in the kindness of their father, they sent to summon the woodcutter and his wife, who confirmed all their assertions. But as no money was found in the cottage, whose inhabitants appeared to subsist on their labor, the officers knew not what to think.

Meantime they arrested the woodcutter for the purpose of

identifying his children. Pale, and trembling like criminals, the old couple followed the guards. Mother Thomas was ready to faint, and doubly grieved for leaving poor Rose all alone, especially as this was her day for being white and beautiful. She begged her not to leave the house, but to live on the milk of her goats, and to bake cakes of some meal which was in the bin. Their adieus were heart-rending; although the soldiers declared that in three days the forester should be at liberty to return, provided the innocence of his family was established. Rose believed them, and endeavored to take courage. But more than a month passed, and no tidings of her parents. She could not then prevent herself from wandering a little on the highway; and having walked till sunset, wept so bitterly, that her beauty indeed must have been a fairy-gift to remain uninjured.

One evening, being more worn out than usual, she seated herself at the foot of a tree and fell asleep. A slight noise awoke her, and, on looking up, she perceived a young gentleman richly dressed, who was contemplating her with evident astonishment. "Art thou a goddess, or a simple mortal?" cried he.

"Sir," replied Rose, "I am the daughter of a poor woodcutter, who lives in the forest; it is late, and I beg you will not detain me."

"You are a wayward beauty, indeed!" replied the prince, for so he was; "but as my way lies in that direction, I hope you will permit me to see you home."

"It is not in my power to prevent you," said Rose, without raising her eyes.

The prince at this moment remarked that she had been weeping, and, delighted to have an opportunity of offering sympathy and consolation, entreated her to impart her grief to him. "I am not actuated by mere curiosity," added he; "I never can behold a woman in tears without feeling moved to the bottom of my soul! Tell me your distress, and I will neither sleep nor eat till I have aided you."

Rose timidly raised her lovely blue eyes, to see whether the

countenance of the prince harmonized with his discourse; but although he was not actually ugly, his features wore an expression too stern and hypocritical to invite her confidence. She therefore walked silently forward, and when near the cottage felt so uneasy that, for the first time, she invented a lie in order to get rid of him. "You seem to compassionate my sorrows," said she; "meanwhile you only increase them. When my mother sees me accompanied by a great gentleman like you, she will beat me, and not believe that you have followed me against my will."

This reasoning appeared so just to the prince, who felt himself affected by a passion such as he had never before experienced, that he consented to retire, entreating Rose to meet him the next evening at the same hour. She refused to give a decisive answer, and returned home much dejected, recalling all the words of the stranger, and almost reproaching herself for having behaved so harshly to him.

The following day Rose took mechanically the same route, going always in the path by which her parents might be expected. Her provisions being nearly exhausted, she feared to die of hunger, and began to think that this gentleman, who had been repulsed so rudely, could, perhaps, obtain news of her family. Suddenly beholding him leaning against a tree, looking very melancholy and dejected, she threw herself at his feet, bathed in tears, and said:

"Sir, a wretch who has lost everything dear, supplicates your compassion. You are so kind—so tender-hearted——"

"What does the vile creature want?" exclaimed the prince, with a savage expression. "How dare you have the impertinence to address me? I wonder what prevents me from shooting you? I lost my sport all yesterday in following a pretty girl; here is game of a new description."

Rose started up, overwhelmed with terror, while the prince laughed most brutally. It was not till that moment she recollected that this was her black day, which accounted for his not recognizing her. "Ah!" thought she, "this is the humane man who could not behold a woman weep; because my color

displeases him, he is ready to take my life. No hope now remains for me—my misfortunes are at their height!"

Rose wept all night; yet she could not prevent herself from returning to the same spot on the following day; she felt irresistibly led thither, dreading, and yet wishing, to meet the prince.

He had been already waiting above an hour, and accosted her with a degree of respect quite unusual for him; but he was in love, and love makes the worst of people better for the time.

"Cruel beauty!" said he, in a courtier-like style, to which Rose was little accustomed, "what have I not suffered during your absence! I even remained all night in the wood, in expectation of you, and the queen my mother despatched messengers everywhere, fearing some accident had befallen me."

"The queen, your mother!" exclaimed Rose. "Are you, then, the son of a queen?"

"I have betrayed myself!" said the prince, striking his forehead in a theatrical manner. "Yes, it is true, I have that misfortune. You will now fear me; and what we fear we never love."

"The wicked alone are to be feared," answered Rose. "I am very glad to hear that you are a king, for I know that you will be my husband."

The prince, who little guessed the enchanter's communication, was confounded by the unembarrassed freedom of her manner; but it was far from displeasing to him. "You are ambitious," said he, smiling; "but there is nothing to which beauty may not pretend. Tell me only how I can have the happiness of serving you, and you shall see that everything is possible to love."

Rose sat down on the grass, and related in very simple terms the story of the purse; confessed that she had deceived him, and that, so far from being severely treated at home, she was now weeping her mother's loss; that the king must take measures for the discovery and liberation of her family, before he could hope to win her affections, or pretend to her hand.

The enamored monarch vowed he would not lose a moment;

and although she behaved with much dignity, her every word and look was adorable in his eyes. Rose thought all night of the fine fortune of being a queen; she would then no longer wear wooden shoes; and, above all, might have an opportunity of being useful to her dear parents.

These meetings continued every alternate day during a week; and the queen dowager was informed that her son neglected all business, and thought of nothing but making love. She was in despair. This prince was surnamed the Terrible, by reason of his ferocity to women: till that moment he had never loved, but he had frequently made pretense of it, and when successful, it was not unusual with him to cut out the poor ladies' tongues, put out their eyes, or even throw them into the sea. The least pretext sufficed for this; and the queen, who was of a kind disposition, lamented that yet another victim was preparing. The courtiers begged her to be tranquil; said it was nothing more than the daughter of a poor woodcutter whom his majesty now admired, and that if he did kill her, it would be of little consequence.

But the courtiers, and the queen dowager herself, were altogether bewildered when the king, having liberated the woodcutter and his family, brought Rose to the palace as his wife. She was not at all abashed or out of countenance; she behaved with the utmost respect to the queen, and with affability to all. It was universally remarked: "The king has committed a folly, but that charming girl is his excuse, and no man would have been wiser under similar circumstances."

A grand ball was given in the evening. Rose danced well enough for a queen; and she yielded herself up entirely to the enchantment of such a happy day. The prince, ever eager to be near her, was figuring away in a quadrille, when twelve o'clock struck: great, then, was his astonishment, when, gazing passionately on his partner, he beheld—a negress!

"What metamorphosis is this?" cried he, rudely seizing her arm; "where is the princess I married to-day?"

Rose bent her head in confusion; it still bore her diamonds and her crown,—no doubt could exist of her identity.

"Wretched, hideous black, thou shalt surely die!" cried the king; "none shall deceive me with impunity." He then drew a poniard and was preparing to take instant vengeance, when, recollecting himself—"I do thee too much honor," said he; "rather let my cooks cut thee in pieces to make a hash for my hounds."

The old queen, as humane as her son was cruel, knew there was but one means of saving the unfortunate victim; this was to appear still more enraged than the king.

"I truly feel this injury," said she; "sometimes you have reproached my weakness, but now behold a proof that I also can avenge. Your orders must be strictly fulfilled—I myself shall witness the execution." She then signed to the guards to lay hold of the unfortunate Rose, who was dragged away by an iron chain fastened round her neck. She gave herself up for lost, and uttering the most heart-rending cries, was led away to a pigeon-house at the end of the palace, furnished with some clean straw where, however, the queen promised to come on the following day.

Her majesty kept her word. Much affected by the sweetness of the hapless bride, she promised to mitigate, as far as possible, her melancholy situation.

Rose, very grateful, supplicated her benefactress to inform the woodcutter's family that she was still alive, knowing what they would suffer should the story reach them of the black Rose having breakfasted the king's hounds. The queen promised to employ a confidential domestic; and Rose, who had still preserved her wooden shoes, sent one, that her father might recognize his handiwork.

A few days afterward a young peasant arrived from the cottage; he brought some cakes and cheese, made by Mother Thomas, which Rose preferred to all the delicacies of the palace.

This young peasant, who was named Mirto, related to Rose everything concerning her dear parents, and took back very loving messages from her to them.

Mirto found so much pleasure in conversing with the fair

prisoner, and had so often cakes to carry, that they were seldom asunder. He said he was an orphan, and having some work to do in the prison where Thomas had been confined, there formed a friendship with the family. In return for some little services then rendered them, he desired to learn the trade of the wooden shoes; being very ingenious, he became a valuable acquisition. He never had felt so happy before. In truth, he was not aware that this happiness received its date from the hour in which he first saw Rose.

Alas! the poor Rose was only too sensible of his affection, and feeling the duty of struggling against it, found herself still more miserable than before.

"Whatever may be the conduct of Prince Terrible," said she to herself, "I have married him. It is certainly very hard to love a husband who wished to kill me, but still I should not permit myself to love another."

For a whole month following she had sufficient resolution to see Mirto no more, and was becoming sick with chagrin and weariness. The queen visited her frequently, bringing all sorts of sweetmeats, and a singing-bird, to divert her captivity. She brought no finery; indeed, that would have been quite thrown away on the pigeons.

At length, one day Rose heard a great noise in the palace. People kept running to and fro—all the bells were rung, and all the cannons fired. The poor prisoner mounted up to one of the pigeon-holes, and peeping through, perceived the palace hung with black. She knew not what to think. But some one of the queen's officers appeared, and conducted her in due form to the court. Rose, all trembling, inquired what had happened.

"Your majesty is a widow," replied the officer; "the king has been killed in hunting; here are your weeds, of which the queen begs your acceptance."

Rose was much agitated, but she followed the officer in silence, with a sad and serious aspect, as a dignified personage should do when informed of the death of a husband.

The queen was a tender mother, and although fully conscious of the ferocious disposition of her son, she deeply la-

mented him, and wept bitterly on embracing her daughter-in-law. "Your husband is no more," said she; "forget his errors, my dear child; the remainder of my life shall be devoted to making atonement for them."

The princess threw herself at her benefactress's feet, and declared all was forgotten. "If your majesty deigns to permit me to speak candidly," added she, "and will bestow a moment's attention, I shall confess the dearest wishes of my heart!"

"Speak," said the queen; "nothing now can assuage my grief save an opportunity of proving to you my friendship."

"I was not born for a queen," continued Rose. "My mother is a poor forester, but she has been a tender parent, and weeps incessantly for my absence."

"Let her be conducted hither," replied the queen.

"This is not all, madam," continued Rose; "I confess that I love a young peasant, who has assisted my father to make wooden shoes. If I were the wife of Mirto, and your majesty would have the goodness to give some assistance to my family, my old father might be freed from labor, and I be the happiest woman in the world."

The queen embraced Rose, and promised all she wished. She then conducted her to the forest; and just as they had reached its boundary, they perceived in the air a mahogany car, mounted on wheels of mother-of-pearl; two pretty white lambs were yoked to it, which Rose immediately recognized as those of the Fairy Coquette.

The car descended, and the fairy alighting thus addressed the queen: "Madam, I come to seek my child, and am delighted to find you willing to part with her, for she has a lover whom I approve; who loves her faithfully, though hopelessly, which is a thing more rare than all the treasures of your majesty's crown."

The fairy then addressing herself to Rose, related that her enemy, the Enchanter Barabapatapouf, had just been killed in combat with another giant. "Now," added Coquette, "I have full power to render you happy"; and passing her fair hand

over Rose's face, the negro color and features vanished—to reappear no more.

The queen, convinced that her daughter-in-law required nothing further, offered only her portrait, as a token of esteem and friendship. Rose received it with grateful respect, then ascended the fairy's car, and was in a few minutes surrounded by the foresters, who never wearied of caressing her. Poor Mirto drew back, trembling, not knowing whether to hope or fear; but Coquette, perceiving their mutual embarrassment, declared that she had ordained this marriage from the very beginning. She blessed them, gave them a flock of beautiful white sheep, a cottage covered with honeysuckles and roses, a lovely garden abounding with fruits and flowers, and a moderate sum of money; endowing them also with life for a hundred years, uninterrupted health, and constant love.

# *The White Dove*

A KING had two sons. They were a couple of madcaps, who had always some frolic on hand. One day they rowed out to sea in a little boat all by themselves. It was beautiful weather when they started, but they had no sooner got some little distance from the land than a terrific storm arose. Overboard went the oars, the little boat tossed about like a nutshell on the rolling billows, and the princes were forced to hold on to the seats to prevent themselves from being washed overboard too.

Just then a curious kind of boat came alongside, and that was a kneading-trough, in which sat an old woman. She called to them, saying they might reach land safely yet, if they would just promise to give her their baby brother.

"We can't do that," replied the princes, "because we haven't got a baby brother."

"Well, if ever you have one, then," said the old woman.

"We can't do that either; mother would never consent to *that*," said the princes.

"Then you may go to the bottom of the sea, and stop there, the two of you!" cried the old woman. "But it is just possible that your mother might prefer keeping the two sons she has already; besides, you may never have a baby brother at all!"

So she rowed away in her kneading-trough; but the storm howled louder than before, and the water washed into the boat so fast that it was on the point of sinking.

Then the princes bethought themselves there certainly was something in what the old woman had said about their mother, and they were also anxious to save their own lives, so they

called to the old woman, promising that it should be as she wished.

In a moment the storm ceased, the waves went down, the boat drifted to land just in front of their father's castle, and the two princes got safely home, and were received with open arms by their father and mother, who had been in a great fright about them.

The brothers, however, said not one word about the promise they had made. But one day a baby brother did arrive; still they told no one of what they had done.

Now this new brother was a most beautiful child, and his mother loved him beyond everything else in the world; he grew up to be a handsome young man, and his brothers had never seen or heard anything more of the old witch.

Well, one evening there arose a fearful storm, and a thick fog came on, and it was quite dark. The storm howled and roared round the king's castle, and presently there came a loud knocking at the door of the room where the young prince was. He went to the door, and there stood an old woman, with a kneading-trough slung across her back. She told him he must come with her directly. His brothers had promised to give him to her if she would save their lives; and although it happened a long, long time ago, still a promise *was* a promise.

"As you saved my brothers' lives, and as they promised me to you for that reason, I will go with you," said the prince.

So they went down to the shore together, and he took his place in the kneading-trough with the witch, and she sailed away with him over the sea to her own home.

And now the prince was in the power of the old witch, and became her servant. The first thing she set him to do was to sort feathers.

"You see this heap of feathers," she said; "you must have those ready by the time I come back this evening, or I shall set you a harder task still."

So he sat himself down by the heap of feathers, and picked and sorted until there was only one feather left that he had not

sorted. Then came a whirlwind at that very moment, and whirled all the feathers round and round and swept them on to the floor in a heap, where they lay, looking as if they had been pressed together and stamped down. So he had to begin his work all over again; and now there was only an hour till the evening, when the old witch was expected home, and he saw that it was impossible for him to finish in time.

Just then he heard something tapping at the window-pane, and a soft voice that said:

"Let me in, and I will help you."

It was a white dove that spoke, sitting outside on the window-ledge, tapping with its beak against the window-pane.

He opened the window, and the dove came in, and set to work at once, picking out each feather with its beak. And in an hour's time there lay all the feathers sorted as neatly as possible; and the dove flew out of the window as the witch came in at the door.

"See now," said the old woman, "that is really more than I should have given you credit for. You have sorted the feathers very neatly. What nimble fingers, too, for a prince to have!"

Next morning the witch said to the prince:

"To-day you shall have an easy task. Just outside the door here I have a little bundle of firewood lying. You shall chop that up into small kindling pieces for me to light the fires with. That is soon done, but it must be finished by the time I come home."

The prince took a little ax and set to work at once. He chopped and he chipped, and it seemed to him he was getting through his task very quickly; but the day was drawing on, and it was now long past noon, and yet he was not near finishing. The bundle of firewood kept getting bigger and bigger, in spite of all he took from it. So he wiped the perspiration from his brow, and then let his hands fall to his side, feeling very dejected and uneasy in his mind, for he knew it would go ill with him if he had not finished his task by the time the witch came home.

Then the white dove came flying toward him, alighted on on the bundle of firewood, and cooed and said:

"Shall I help you?"

"Yes, do! and thank you for the help you gave me yesterday, and for that you offer me now," said the prince.

Then the little dove seized one piece of wood after another, and chopped and split it with its beak.

The prince could scarcely take the wood as fast as the dove chopped it. And very soon all the firewood was split up into quite small kindling pieces.

Then the dove flew up and perched upon his shoulder, and the prince thanked it, and stroked it, and smoothed its white feathers, and then he kissed its little red beak. The next moment it was no longer a dove, but a young and beautiful maiden standing by his side.

She then told him that she was a princess, whom the witch had stolen, or obtained in the same way she had got possession of him, and whom she had enchanted. But with his kiss she had received her natural form again, and if he would be true to her and take her for his wife, she would be able to free both herself and him from the power of the witch.

The prince was completely captivated with the beautiful princess, and was willing to do anything, whatever it might be, in order to win her. So she said to him:

"Well, then, when the witch comes home, you must beg her to grant you one wish, as you have so well performed all that she gave you to do. And when she says 'Yes,' you must ask her to give you the princess she has on her estate, and who is now flying about in the form of a white dove. But now you must first of all take a red silken thread and bind it round my little finger, that you may always know me again, in any shape that the old witch may change me into."

The prince immediately bound a red silken thread round the little white finger, and in a moment the princess was a dove again, and flew away, and directly afterward the old witch came home with her kneading-trough slung across her back.

"Now I must say you are quick at your work," said she; "and that is something such princely hands are not much accustomed to."

So the prince said:

"Since you are so well pleased with my work, no doubt you will grant me a little favor, and give me something I should very much like to have."

"Well, really," said the witch, hesitating; "but what is it now you want to have?"

"I want to have the princess who is here on this estate, and who is changed into a white dove," said the prince.

"What nonsense!" cried the old woman. "What put it into your head to imagine that there are any princesses here flying about in the form of white doves? But if it is a princess that you want, you may take one of those we have here, such as they are!"

And then she went out, and came back dragging with her a shaggy little gray donkey, with long ears.

"Will you have this one?" said she. "It is the only princess you will get here."

The prince made good use of his eyes, and so he espied a red silken thread round one of the donkey's hoofs; and then he said:

"Yes, I will take that one."

"Now what could you do with it?" asked the witch.

"I could ride it," replied the prince.

"Ah! yes, just you do that!" said she, and off she went, dragging the donkey with her.

"What have you done with my donkey?" said the prince; "it is my donkey, and I will have it."

"Oh, certainly!" answered the witch, who now returned, dragging with her an old woman, wrinkled, toothless, and palsied. "You can't have any other princess; will you take her?"

"Yes, I will," said the prince, for he saw his red silken thread round the old woman's finger.

Then the old witch was furious, and she rushed about

smashing everything she could lay her hands upon, so that the broken pieces flew about the ears of the prince and the princess, who was now standing there, her own beautiful self once more.

Then came the wedding, for the witch was forced to keep her promise. So the prince was to have the princess, come what might.

And the princess said to him:

"Now at the marriage-feast you may eat anything you please, but you must not drink anything at all, for if you do, you will straightway forget me."

But on the wedding-day the prince had forgotten all about the warning, and he stretched out his hand and took a goblet of wine.

The princess, however, was on the watch, and gave him a nudge with her elbow, and all the wine was spilled on the tablecloth.

Then up jumped the witch, just as she had done the first time they outwitted her, and she smashed all the dishes and cups and cans, so that the bits whizzed about their ears.

Then they were conducted to the bridal chamber, and the door was locked. And the princess said:

"Now the witch has kept her word, but she will do nothing more of her own free will to help us, and we must get away as fast as we can. I will put these two sticks in the bed, and they shall answer for us when the witch calls to us. Now you must take the flower-pot and the glass of water that are standing on the window-sill, and then we must slip out and see about making our escape."

So said, so done. They made haste and got off under cover of the darkness and the princess led the way, for she knew the road, which she spied out when she was flying about in the form of a dove.

About midnight the old witch came to the door of the bridal chamber and called. The two sticks answered, so she thought the prince and princess were there, and she went away again.

Before daylight the witch was at the door again calling to them, and again the sticks answered for them; so then she thought she had the prince and princess safe.

"At sunrise," said she, "I will wreak my vengeance upon them both."

So with the first ray of sunlight the old witch burst into the room, but she found no prince and no princess—nothing but two pieces of stick lying in the bed, and they never breathed a word, they only stared. So she dashed them to the floor, and they split up into thousands of bits, and she rushed off after the runaways.

With the first ray of sunlight the princess said to the prince:

"Look back. Do you see anything behind us?"

"Yes, I see a dark cloud a long way off," said he.

"Throw the flower-pot back over your head," said the princess.

And when that was done there stood a great thick wood behind them.

When the witch came to the wood she could not get through till she had gone home again and fetched her ax with which to cut her way through.

Soon after that the princess said again to the prince:

"Look back. Do you see anything behind us?"

"Yes," said the prince, "there is that great black cloud again."

"Throw the glass of water over your head," said the princess.

And he did so, and there lay a great lake behind them. The witch could not get across that till she had run home again and fetched her kneading-trough.

Meantime the fugitives had reached the castle where the prince used to live. They clambered over the garden wall, and ran straight through the garden, and crept in through an open window. But the witch was close behind them.

Then the princess seated herself at the window, and blew upon the witch, and, as she blew, hundreds of white doves

flew out of her mouth, and they fluttered and whirred round the witch's head till she got into such a fury that she turned to flint, and there she lies now in the shape of a great block of flint in front of the window.

But in the castle there was great joy over the prince and his bride. And his two elder brothers came and knelt down before him and confessed their sin. He alone should now inherit the kingdom and the crown, and they would be his faithful subjects.

# *Rosanella*

EVERYBODY knows that though the fairies live hundreds of years they do sometimes die, and especially as they are obliged to pass one day in every week under the form of some animal, when, of course, they are liable to accident. It was in this way that death once overtook the queen of the fairies, and it became necessary to call a general assembly to elect a new sovereign. After much discussion, it appeared that the choice lay between two fairies, one called Surcantine and the other Paridamie; and their claims were so equal that it was impossible without injustice to prefer one to the other. Under these circumstances it was unanimously decided that whichever of the two could show to the world the greatest wonder should be queen; but it was to be a special kind of wonder—no moving of mountains or any such common fairy tricks would do. Surcantine, therefore, resolved that she would bring up a prince whom nothing could make constant, while Paridamie decided to display to admiring mortals a princess so charming that no one could see her without falling in love with her. They were allowed to take their own time, and meanwhile the four oldest fairies were to attend to the affairs of the kingdom.

Now, Paridamie had for a long time been very friendly with King Bardondon, who was a most accomplished prince and whose court was the model of what a court should be. His queen, Balanice, was also charming; indeed, it is rare to find a husband and wife so perfectly of one mind about everything. They had one little daughter, whom they had named Rosanella because she had a little pink rose printed upon her white throat. From her earliest infancy she had shown the most astonishing

intelligence, and the courtiers knew her smart sayings by heart and repeated them on all occasions. In the middle of the night following the assembly of fairies Queen Balanice woke up with a shriek, and when her maids of honor ran to see what was the matter, they found she had had a frightful dream.

"I thought," said she, "that my little daughter had changed into a bouquet of roses, and that as I held it in my hand a bird swooped down suddenly and snatched it from me and carried it away. Let some one run and see that all is well with the princess," she added.

So they ran; but what was their dismay when they found that the cradle was empty; and though they sought high and low, not a trace of Rosanella could they discover. The queen was inconsolable, and so, indeed, was the king, only being a man he did not say quite so much about his feelings. He presently proposed to Balanice that they should spend a few days at one of their palaces in the country; and to this she willingly agreed, since her grief made the gaiety of the capital distasteful to her. One lovely summer evening, as they sat together on a shady lawn shaped like a star, from which radiated twelve splendid avenues of trees, the queen looked round and saw a charming peasant girl approaching by each of these paths, and what was still more singular was that every one of them carried something in a basket which appeared to occupy her whole attention. As each drew near, she laid her basket at Balanice's feet, saying:

"Charming queen, may this be some slight consolation to you in your unhappiness!"

The queen hastily opened the baskets and found in each a lovely baby girl, about the same age as the little princess for whom she sorrowed so deeply. At first the sight of them renewed her grief, but presently their charms so gained upon her that she forgot her melancholy in providing them with nursery-maids, cradle-rockers, and ladies-in-waiting, and in sending hither and thither for swings and dolls and tops and bushels of the finest sweetmeats.

Oddly enough, each baby had upon its throat a tiny pink

rose. The queen found it so difficult to decide on suitable names for all of them that until she could settle the matter she chose a special color for every one, by which it should be known, so that when they were all together they looked like nothing so much as a nosegay of gay flowers. As they grew older it became evident that though they were all remarkably intelligent and profited equally by the education they received, yet they differed one from another in disposition, so much so that they gradually ceased to be known as "Pearl," or "Primrose," or whatever might have been their color, and the queen instead would say:

"Where is my Sweet?" or "my Beautiful," or "my Gay."

Of course, with all these charms they had lovers by the dozens, not only in their own court, but princes from afar, who were constantly arriving, attracted by the reports which were spread abroad; but these lovely girls, the first maids of honor, were as discreet as they were beautiful and favored no one.

But let us return to Surcantine. She had fixed upon the son of a king who was cousin to Bardondon to bring up as her fickle prince. She had before, at his christening, given him all the graces of mind and body that a prince could possibly require, but now she redoubled her efforts and spared no pains in adding every imaginable charm and fascination, so that whether he happened to be cross or amiable, splendidly or simply attired, serious or frivolous, he was always perfectly irresistible! In truth, he was a charming young fellow, since the fairy had given him the best heart in the world as well as the best head, and had left nothing to be desired but constancy. It cannot be denied, however, that Prince Mirliflor was a desperate flirt and as fickle as the wind; so much so that by the time he arrived at his eighteenth birthday there was not a heart left for him to conquer in his father's kingdom—they were all his own and he was tired of every one! Things were in this state when he was invited to visit the court of his father's cousin, King Bardondon.

Imagine his feelings when he arrived and was presented at once to twelve of the loveliest creatures in the world, and his

embarrassment was heightened by the fact that they all liked him as much as he liked each one of them, so that things came to such a pass that he was never happy a single instant without them. For could he not whisper soft speeches to Sweet and laugh with Joy while he looked at Beauty? And in his more serious moments what could be pleasanter than to talk to Grave upon some shady lawn while he held the hand of Loving in his own, and all the others lingered near in sympathetic silence? For the first time in his life he really loved, though the object of his devotion was not one person but twelve, to whom he was equally attached, and even Surcantine was deceived into thinking that this was indeed the height of inconstancy. But Paridamie said not a word.

In vain did Prince Mirliflor's father write commanding him to return, and proposing for him one good match after another. Nothing in the world could tear him from his twelve enchantresses.

One day the queen gave a large garden-party, and just as the guests were all assembled, and Prince Mirliflor was as usual dividing his attentions between the twelve beauties, a humming of bees was heard. The rose-maidens, fearing their stings, uttered little shrieks and fled all together to a distance from the rest of the company. Immediately, to the horror of all who were looking on, the bees pursued them, and, growing suddenly to an enormous size, pounced each upon a maiden and carried her off into the air, and in an instant they were all lost to view. This amazing occurrence plunged the whole court into the deepest affliction, and Prince Mirliflor, after giving way to the most violent grief at first, fell gradually into a state of such deep dejection that it was feared if nothing could rouse him he would certainly die. Surcantine came in all haste to see what she could do for her darling, but he rejected with scorn all the portraits of lovely princesses which she offered him for his collection. In short, it was evident that he was in a bad way, and the fairy was at her wits' end. One day, as he wandered about absorbed in melancholy reflections, he heard sudden shouts and exclamations of amazement, and if he had taken

the trouble to look up he could not have helped being as astonished as every one else, for through the air a chariot of crystal was slowly approaching which glittered in the sunshine. Six lovely maidens with shining wings drew it by rose-colored ribbons, while a whole flight of others, equally beautiful, were building long garlands of roses crossed above it, so as to form a complete canopy. In it sat the fairy Paridamie, and by her side a princess whose beauty positively dazzled all who saw her. At the foot of the great staircase they descended and proceeded to the queen's apartments, though every one had run together to see this marvel, till it was quite difficult to make a way through the crowd; and exclamations of wonder rose on all sides at the loveliness of the strange princess. "Great queen," said Paridamie, "permit me to restore to you your daughter Rosanella, whom I stole out of her cradle."

After the first transports of joy were over the queen said to Paridamie:

"But my twelve lovely ones, are they lost to me forever? Shall I never see them again?"

But Paridamie only said:

"Very soon you will cease to miss them!" in a tone that evidently meant "Don't ask me any more questions." And then mounting again into her chariot she swiftly disappeared.

The news of his beautiful cousin's arrival was soon carried to the prince, but he had hardly the heart to go and see her. However, it became absolutely necessary that he should pay his respects, and he had scarcely been five minutes in her presence before it seemed to him that she combined in her own charming person all the gifts and graces which had so attracted him in the twelve rose-maidens whose loss he had so truly mourned; and after all it is really more satisfactory to make love to one person at a time. So it came to pass that before he knew where he was he was entreating his lovely cousin to marry him, and the moment the words had left his lips Paridamie appeared, smiling and triumphant, in the chariot of the queen of the fairies, for by that time they had all heard of her success and declared her to have earned the kingdom. She had to give a

full account of how she had stolen Rosanella from her cradle and divided her character into twelve parts, that each might charm Prince Mirliflor, and when once more united might cure him of his inconstancy once and forever.

And as one more proof of the fascination of the whole Rosanella, I may tell you that even the defeated Surcantine sent her a wedding-gift and was present at the ceremony, which took place as soon as the guests could arrive. Prince Mirliflor was constant for the rest of his life. And indeed who would not have been in his place? As for Rosanella, she loved him as much as all the twelve beauties put together, so they reigned in peace and happiness to the end of their long lives.

# *The Stars in the Sky*

ONCE on a time and twice on a time, and all times together as ever I heard tell of, there was a tiny lassie who would weep all day to have the stars in the sky to play with; she wouldn't have this, and she wouldn't have that, but it was always the stars she would have. So one fine day off she went to find them. And she walked and she walked and she walked, till by and by she came to a mill-dam.

"Goode'en to ye," says she, "I'm seeking the stars in the sky to play with. Have you seen any?"

"Oh, yes, my bonny lassie," said the mill-dam. "They shine in my own face o' nights till I can't sleep for them. Jump in and perhaps you'll find one."

So she jumped in, and swam about and swam about and swam about, but ne'er a one could she see. So she went on till she came to a brooklet.

"Goode'en to ye, Brooklet, Brooklet," says she; "I'm seeking the stars in the sky to play with. Have you seen any?"

"Yes, indeed, my bonny lassie," said the brooklet. "They glint on my banks at night. Paddle about, and maybe you'll find one."

So she paddled and she paddled and she paddled, but ne'er a one did she find. So on she went till she came to the Good Folk.

"Goode'en to ye, Good Folk," says she; "I'm looking for the stars in the sky to play with. Have ye seen e'er a one?"

"Why, yes, my bonny lassie," said the Good Folk. "They

shine on the grass here o' nights. Dance with us, and maybe you'll find one."

And she danced and she danced and she danced, but ne'er a one did she see. So down she sate; I suppose she wept.

"Oh, dearie me, oh, dearie me," says she, "I've swam and I've paddled and I've danced, and if ye'll not help me I shall never find the stars in the sky to play with."

But the Good Folk whispered together, and one of them came up to her and took her by the hand and said: "If you won't go home to your mother, go forward, go forward; mind you take the right road. Ask Four Feet to carry you to No Feet at all, and tell No Feet at all to carry you to the stairs without steps, and if you can climb that——"

"Oh, shall I be among the stars in the sky then?" cried the lassie.

"If you'll not be, then you'll be elsewhere," said the Good Folk, and set to dancing again.

So on she went again with a light heart, and by and by she came to a saddled horse, tied to a tree.

"Goode'en to ye, Beast," said she; "I'm seeking the stars in the sky to play with. Will you give me a lift, for all my bones are an-aching."

"Nay," said the horse, "I know naught of the stars in the sky, and I'm here to do the bidding of the Good Folk, and not my own will."

"Well," said she, "it's from the Good Folk I come, and they bade me tell Four Feet to carry me to No Feet at all."

"That's another story," said he; "jump up and ride with me."

So they rode and they rode and they rode, till they got out of the forest and found themselves at the edge of the sea. And on the water in front of them was a wide glistening path running straight out toward a beautiful thing that rose out of the water and went up into the sky, and was all the colors in the world, blue and red and green, and wonderful to look at.

"Now get you down," said the horse; "I've brought ye to

the end of the land, and that's as much as Four Feet can do. I must away home to my own folk."

"But," said the lassie, "where's No Feet at all, and where's the stair without steps?"

"I know not," said the horse, "it's none of my business neither. So goode'en to ye, my bonny lassie"; and off he went.

So the lassie stood still and looked at the water, till a strange kind of fish came swimming up to her feet.

"Goode'en to ye, big Fish," says she; "I'm looking for the stars in the sky, and for the stairs that climb up to them. Will ye show me the way?"

"Nay," said the fish, "I can't unless you bring me word from the Good Folk."

"Yes, indeed," said she. "They said Four Feet would bring me to No Feet at all, and No Feet at all would carry me to the stairs without steps."

"Ah, well," said the fish; "that's all right then. Get on my back and hold fast."

And off he went—kerplash!—into the water, along the silver path toward the bright arch. And the nearer they came the brighter the sheen of it, till she had to shade her eyes from the light of it.

And as they came to the foot of it, she saw it was a broad bright road, sloping up and away into the sky, and at the far, far end of it she could see wee shining things dancing about.

"Now," said the fish, "here you are, and yon's the stair; climb up, if you can, but hold on fast. I'll warrant you find the stair easier at home than by such a way; 'twas ne'er meant for lassies' feet to travel"; and off he splashed through the water.

So she clomb and she clomb and she clomb, but ne'er a step higher did she get: the light was before her and around her, and the water behind her, and the more she struggled the more she was forced down into the dark and the cold, and the more she clomb the deeper she fell.

But she clomb and she clomb, till she got dizzy in the

light and shivered with the cold, and dazed with the fear; but still she clomb, till at last, quite dazed and silly-like, she let clean go, and sank down—down—down.

And bang she came on to the hard boards, and found herself sitting, weeping and wailing, by the bedside at home all alone.

# *Cap o' Rushes*

WELL, there was once a very rich gentleman, and he had three daughters, and he thought he'd see how fond they were of him. So he says to the first, "How much do you love me, my dear?"

"Why," says she, "as I love my life."

"That's good," says he.

So he says to the second, "How much do *you* love me, my dear?"

"Why," says she, "better nor all the world."

"That's good," says he.

So he says to the third, "How much do *you* love me, my dear?"

"Why, I love you as fresh meat loves salt," says she.

Well, but he was angry. "You don't love me at all," says he, "and in my house you stay no more." So he drove her out there and then, and shut the door in her face.

Well, she went away on and on till she came to a fen, and there she gathered a lot of rushes and made them into a kind of a sort of a cloak with a hood, to cover her from head to foot, and to hide her fine clothes. And then she went on and on till she came to a great house.

"Do you want a maid?" says she.

"No, we don't," said they.

"I haven't nowhere to go," says she; "and I ask no wages, and do any sort of work," says she.

"Well," said they, "if you like to wash the pots and scrape the saucepans you may stay," said they.

So she stayed there and washed the pots and scraped the saucepans and did all the dirty work. And because she gave no name they called her "Cap o' Rushes."

Well, one day there was to be a great dance a little way off, and the servants were allowed to go and look on at the grand people. Cap o' Rushes said she was too tired to go, so she stayed at home.

But when they were gone, she offed with her cap o' rushes, and cleaned herself and went to the dance. And no one there was so finely dressed as she.

Well, who should be there but her master's son, and what should he do but fall in love with her the minute he set eyes on her. He wouldn't dance with any one else.

But before the dance was done, Cap o' Rushes slipped off, and away she went home. And when the other maids came back, she was pretending to be asleep with her cap o' rushes on.

Well, next morning they said to her, "You did miss a sight, Cap o' Rushes!"

"What was that?" says she.

"Why, the beautifullest lady you ever see, dressed right gay and ga'. The young master, he never took his eyes off her."

"Well, I should have liked to have seen her," says Cap o' Rushes.

"Well, there's to be another dance this evening, and perhaps she'll be there."

But, come the evening, Cap o' Rushes said she was too tired to go with them. Howsoever, when they were gone, she offed with her cap o' rushes and cleaned herself, and away she went to the dance.

The master's son had been reckoning on seeing her, and he danced with no one else, and never took his eyes off her. But, before the dance was over, she slipped off, and home she went, and when the maids came back she pretended to be asleep with her cap o' rushes on.

Next day they said to her again: "Well, Cap o' Rushes, you should ha' been there to see the lady. There she was again, gay and ga', and the young master he never took his eyes off her."

"Well, there," says she, "I should ha' liked to ha' seen her."

"Well," says they, "there's a dance again this evening, and you must go with us, for she's sure to be there."

Well, come this evening, Cap o' Rushes said she was too tired to go, and do what they would she stayed at home. But when they were gone, she offed with her cap o' rushes and cleaned herself, and away she went to the dance.

The master's son was rarely glad when he saw her. He danced with none but her and never took his eyes off her. When she wouldn't tell him her name, nor where she came from, he gave her a ring and told her if he didn't see her again he should die.

Well, before the dance was over, off she slipped, and home she went, and when the maids came home she was pretending to be asleep with her cap o' rushes on.

Well, next day they says to her: "There, Cap o' Rushes, you didn't come last night, and now you won't see the lady, for there's no more dances."

"Well, I should have rarely liked to have seen her," says she.

The master's son he tried every way to find out where the lady was gone, but go where he might, and ask whom he might, he never heard anything about her. And he got worse and worse for the love of her till he had to keep his bed.

"Make some gruel for the young master," they said to the cook. "He's dying for the love of the lady." The cook set about making it when Cap o' Rushes came in.

"What are you a-doing of?" says she.

"I'm going to make some gruel for the young master," says the cook, "for he's dying for love of the lady."

"Let me make it," says Cap o' Rushes.

Well, the cook wouldn't at first, but at last she said yes, and Cap o' Rushes made the gruel. And when she had made it, she slipped the ring into it on the sly before the cook took it up-stairs.

The young man he drank it and then he saw the ring at the bottom.

"Send for the cook," says he.

So up she comes.

"Who made this gruel here?" says he.

"I did," says the cook, for she was frightened.

And he looked at her.

"No, you didn't," says he. "Say who did it, and you sha'n't be harmed."

"Well, then 'twas Cap o' Rushes," says she.

"Send Cap o' Rushes here," says he.

So Cap o' Rushes came.

"Did you make my gruel?" says he.

"Yes, I did," says she.

"Where did you get this ring?" says he.

"From him that gave it me," says she.

"Who are you, then?" says the young man.

"I'll show you," says she. And she offed with her cap o' rushes, and there she was in her beautiful clothes.

Well, the master's son he got well very soon, and they were to be married in a little time. It was to be a very grand wedding, and every one was asked far and near. And Cap o' Rushes's father was asked. But she never told anybody who she was.

But before the wedding, she went to the cook, and says she:

"I want you to dress every dish without a mite o' salt."

"That'll be rare nasty," says the cook.

"That doesn't signify," says she.

"Very well," says the cook.

Well, the wedding-day came, and they were married. And after they were married, all the company sat down to the dinner. When they began to eat the meat, it was so tasteless they couldn't eat it. But Cap o' Rushes's father tried first one dish and then another, and then he burst out crying.

"What is the matter?" said the master's son to him.

"Oh!" says he, "I had a daughter. And I asked her how much she loved me. And she said 'As much as fresh meat

loves salt.' And I turned her from my door, for I thought she didn't love me. And now I see she loved me best of all. And she may be dead for aught I know."

"No, father, here she is!" said Cap o' Rushes. And she goes up to him and puts her arms round him.

And so they were all happy ever after.

# *Heart of Ice*

ONCE upon a time there lived a king and queen who were foolish beyond all telling, but nevertheless they were vastly fond of each other. It is true that certain spiteful people were heard to say that this was only one proof the more of their exceeding foolishness, but, of course, you will understand that these were not their own courtiers, since, after all, they were a king and queen, and up to this time all things had prospered with them. For in those days the one thing to be thought of in governing a kingdom was to keep well with all the fairies and enchanters, and on no account to stint them of the cakes, the ells of ribbon, and similar trifles which were their due, and, above all things, when there was a christening, to remember to invite every single one, good, bad, or indifferent, to the ceremony. Now, the foolish queen had one little son who was just going to be christened, and for several months she had been hard at work preparing an enormous list of the names of those who were to be invited, but she quite forgot that it would take nearly as long to read it over as it had taken to write it out. So when the moment of the christening arrived the king—to whom the task had been intrusted—had barely reached the end of the second page and his tongue was tripping with fatigue and haste as he repeated the usual formula: "I conjure and pray you, Fairy So-and-so"—or "Enchanter Such-a-one"—"to honor me with a visit and graciously bestow your gifts upon my son."

To make matters worse, word was brought to him that the fairies asked on the first page had already arrived and were waiting impatiently in the great hall, and grumbling that nobody was there to receive them. Thereupon he gave up the

list in despair and hurried to greet those whom he had succeeded in asking, imploring their good-will so humbly that most of them were touched and promised that they would do his son no harm. But there happened to be among them a fairy from a far country about whom they knew nothing, though her name had been written on the first page of the list. This fairy was annoyed that after having taken the trouble to come so quickly there had been no one to receive her or to help her to alight from the great ostrich on which she had traveled from her distant home, and now she began to mutter to herself in the most alarming way.

"Oh, prate away," said she, "your son will never be anything to boast of. Say what you will, he will be nothing but a manikin——"

No doubt she would have gone on longer in this strain, and given the unhappy little prince half a dozen undesirable gifts, if it had not been for the good fairy Genesta, who held the kingdom under her special protection, and who luckily hurried in just in time to prevent further mischief. When she had by compliments and entreaties pacified the unknown fairy and persuaded her to say no more, she gave the king a hint that now was the time to distribute the presents, after which ceremony they all took their departure, excepting the fairy Genesta, who then went to see the queen and said to her:

"A nice mess you seem to have made of this business, madam. Why did you not condescend to consult *me*? But foolish people like you always think they can do without help or advice, and I observe that in spite of all my goodness to you, you had not even the civility to invite me!"

"Ah! dear madam," cried the king, throwing himself at her feet; "did I ever have time to get as far as your name? See where I put in this mark when I abandoned the hopeless undertaking which I had but just begun!"

"There! there!" said the fairy, "I am not offended. I don't allow myself to be put out by trifles like that with people I really am fond of. But now about your son. I have saved him from a great many disagreeable things, but you must let

me take him away and take care of him, and you will not see him again until he is all covered with fur!"

At these mysterious words the king and queen burst into tears, for they lived in such a hot climate themselves that how or why the prince should come to be covered with fur they could not imagine, and thought it must portend some great misfortune to him.

However, Genesta told them not to disquiet themselves.

"If I left him to you to bring up," said she, "you would be certain to make him as foolish as yourselves. I do not even intend to let him know that he is your son. As for you, you had better give your minds to governing your kingdom properly."

So saying she opened the window, and catching up the little prince, cradle and all, she glided away in the air as if she were skating upon ice, leaving the king and queen in the greatest affliction. They consulted every one who came near them as to what the fairy could possibly have meant by saying that when they saw their son again he would be covered with fur. But nobody could offer any solution of the mystery, only they all seemed to agree that it must be something frightful, and the king and queen made themselves more miserable than ever, and wandered about their palace in a way to make any one pity them. Meantime the fairy had carried off the little prince to her own castle, and placed him under the care of a young peasant woman, whom she bewitched so as to make her think that this new baby was one of her own children. So the prince grew up healthy and strong, leading the simple life of a young peasant, for the fairy thought that he could have no better training; only as he grew older she kept him more and more with herself, that his mind might be cultivated and exercised as well as his body. But her care did not cease there. She resolved that he should be tried by hardships and disappointments and the knowledge of his fellow-men; for indeed she knew the prince would need every advantage that she could give him, since, though he increased in years, he did not increase in height, but remained the tiniest of princes. However,

in spite of this he was exceedingly active and well-formed, and altogether so handsome and agreeable that the smallness of his stature was of no real consequence. The prince was perfectly aware that he was called by the ridiculous name of "Manikin," but he consoled himself by vowing that, happen what might, he would make it illustrious.

In order to carry out her plans for his welfare the fairy now began to send Prince Manikin the most wonderful dreams of adventure by sea and land, and of these adventures he himself was always the hero. Sometimes he rescued a lovely princess from some terrible danger, again he earned a kingdom by some brave deed, until at last he longed to go away and seek his fortune in a far country where his humble birth would not prevent his gaining honor and riches by his courage, and it was with a heart full of ambitious projects that he rode one day into a great city not far from the fairy's castle. As he had set out intending to hunt in the surrounding forest he was quite simply dressed, and carried only a bow and arrows and a light spear; but even thus arrayed he looked graceful and distinguished. As he entered the city he saw that the inhabitants were all racing with one accord toward the market-place, and he also turned his horse in the same direction, curious to know what was going forward. When he reached the spot he found that certain foreigners of strange and outlandish appearance were about to make a proclamation to the assembled citizens, and he hastily pushed his way into the crowd until he was near enough to hear the words of the venerable old man who was their spokesman:

"Let the whole world know that he who can reach the summit of the Ice Mountain shall receive as his reward, not only the incomparable Sabella, fairest of the fair, but also all the realms of which she is queen! Here," continued the old man after he had made this proclamation—"here is the list of all those princes who, struck by the beauty of the princess, have perished in the attempt to win her; and here is the list of those who have just entered upon the high emprise."

Prince Manikin was seized with a violent desire to inscribe

his name among the others, but the remembrance of his dependent position and his lack of wealth held him back. But while he hesitated the old man, with many respectful ceremonies, unveiled a portrait of the lovely Sabella, which was carried by some of the attendants, and after one glance at it the prince delayed no longer, but rushing forward demanded permission to add his name to the list. When they saw his tiny stature and simple attire the strangers looked at each other doubtfully, not knowing whether to accept or refuse him. But the prince said haughtily, "Give me the paper that I may sign it," and they obeyed. What between admiration for the princess and annoyance at the hesitation shown by her ambassadors, the prince was too much agitated to choose any other name than the one by which he was always known. But when, after all the grand titles of the other princes, he simply wrote "Manikin," the ambassadors broke into shouts of uncontrollable laughter.

"Miserable wretches!" cried the prince, "but for the presence of that lovely portrait I would cut off your heads."

But he suddenly remembered that, after all, it was an odd name, and that he had not yet had time to make it famous; so he was calm, and inquired the way to the Princess Sabella's country.

Though his heart did not fail him in the least, still he felt there were many difficulties before him, and he resolved to set out at once, without even taking leave of the fairy, for fear she might try to stop him. Everybody in the town who knew him made great fun of the idea of Manikin's undertaking such an expedition, and it even came to the ears of the foolish king and queen, who laughed over it more than any of the others, without having an idea that the presumptuous Manikin was their only son!

Meantime the prince was traveling on, though the directions he had received for his journey were none of the clearest.

"Four hundred leagues north of Mount Caucasus you will receive your orders and instructions for the conquest of the Ice Mountain."

Fine marching orders, those, for a man starting from a country near where Japan is nowadays!

However, he fared eastward, avoiding all towns, lest the people should laugh at his name, for, you see, he was not a very experienced traveler and had not yet learned to enjoy a joke even if it were against himself. At night he slept in the woods and at first he lived upon wild fruits; but the fairy, who was keeping a benevolent eye upon him, thought that it would never do to let him be half-starved in that way, so she took to feeding him with all sorts of good things while he was asleep, and the prince wondered very much that when he was awake he never felt hungry! True to her plan, the fairy sent him various adventures to prove his courage, and he came successfully through them all, only in his last fight with a furious monster that resembled a fierce tiger he had the ill luck to lose his horse.

Nothing daunted, he struggled along on foot and at last reached a seaport. Here he found a boat sailing for the coast which he desired to reach, and having just enough money to pay his passage, he went on board and they started. But after some days a fearful storm came on, which completely wrecked the little ship, and the prince only saved his life by swimming a long, long way to the only land that was in sight, and which proved to be a desert island. Here he lived by fishing and hunting, always hoping that the good fairy would presently rescue him.

One day as he was looking sadly out to sea he became aware of a curious-looking boat which was drifting slowly toward the shore, and which presently ran into a little creek and there stuck fast in the sand. Prince Manikin rushed down eagerly to examine it, and saw with amazement that the masts and spars were all branched and covered thickly with leaves until it looked like a little wood. Thinking from the stillness that there could be no one on board, the prince pushed aside the branches and sprang over the side, and found himself surrounded by the crew, who lay motionless as dead men and in a most deplorable condition. They, too, had become almost like

trees, and were growing to the deck, or to the masts, or to the sides of the vessel, or to whatever they had happened to be touching when the enchantment fell upon them.

Manikin was struck with pity for their miserable plight, and set to work with might and main to release them. With the sharp point of one of his arrows he gently detached their hands and feet from the wood which held them fast, and carried them on shore, one after another, where he rubbed their rigid limbs and bathed them with infusions of various herbs, with such success that after a few days they recovered perfectly and were as fit to manage a boat as ever. You may be sure that the good fairy Genesta had something to do with this marvelous cure, and she also put it into the prince's head to rub the boat itself with the same magic herbs, which cleared it entirely, and not before it was time, for at the rate at which it was growing before it would very soon have become a forest!

The gratitude of the sailors was extreme, and they willingly promised to land the prince upon any coast he pleased; but when he questioned them about the extraordinary thing that had happened to them and to their ship they could in no way explain it, except that they said as they were passing along a thickly wooded coast a sudden gust of wind had reached them from the land and enveloped them in a dense cloud of dust, after which everything in the boat that was not metal had sprouted and blossomed as the prince had seen, and that they themselves had grown gradually numb and heavy and had finally lost all consciousness. Prince Manikin was deeply interested in this curious story, and collected a quantity of the dust from the bottom of the boat, which he carefully preserved, thinking that its strange property might one day stand him in good stead.

Then they joyfully left the desert island, and after a long and prosperous voyage over calm seas they at length came in sight of land, and resolved to go on shore, not only to take in a fresh stock of water and provisions, but also to find out, if possible, where they were and in what direction to proceed.

As they neared the coast they wondered if this could be

another uninhabited land, for no human beings could be distinguished, and yet that something was stirring became evident, for in the dust-clouds that moved near the ground small dark forms were dimly visible. These appeared to be assembling at the exact spot where they were preparing to run ashore, and what was their surprise to find they were nothing more nor less than large and beautiful spaniels, some mounted as sentries, others grouped in companies and regiments, all eagerly watching their disembarkation. When they found that Prince Manikin, instead of saying, "Shoot them," as they had feared, said "Hi, good dog!" in a thoroughly friendly and ingratiating way, they crowded round him with a great wagging of tails and giving of paws, and very soon made him understand that they wanted him to leave his men with the boat and follow them.

The prince was so curious to know more about them that he agreed willingly; so after arranging with the sailors to wait for him fifteen days, and then, if he had not come back, to go on their way without him, he set out with his new friends. Their way lay inland, and Manikin noticed with great surprise that the fields were well cultivated and that the carts and plows were drawn by horses or oxen, just as they might have been in any other country, and when they passed any village the cottages were trim and pretty, and an air of prosperity was everywhere. At one of the villages a dainty little repast was set before the prince, and while he was eating a chariot was brought, drawn by two splendid horses, which were driven with great skill by a large spaniel. In this carriage he continued his journey very comfortably, passing many similar equipages upon the road, and being always most courteously saluted by the spaniels who occupied them.

At last they drove rapidly into a large town, which Prince Manikin had no doubt was the capital of the kingdom. News of his approach had evidently been received, for all the inhabitants were at their doors and windows, and all the little spaniels had climbed upon the wall and gates to see him arrive. The prince was delighted with the hearty welcome they gave him

and looked round him with the deepest interest. After passing through a few wide streets, well paved and adorned with avenues of fine trees, they drove into the courtyard of a grand palace, which was full of spaniels who were evidently soldiers. "The king's bodyguard," thought the prince to himself as he returned their salutations, and then the carriage stopped and he was shown into the presence of the king, who lay upon a rich Persian carpet surrounded by several little spaniels, who were occupied in chasing away the flies lest they should disturb his Majesty.

He was the most beautiful of all spaniels, with a look of sadness in his large eyes, which quite disappeared as he sprang up to welcome Prince Manikin with every demonstration of delight; after which he made a sign to his courtiers, who came one by one to pay their respects to the visitor. The prince thought that he would find himself puzzled as to how he should carry on a conversation, but as soon as he and the king were once more left alone a secretary of state was sent for, who wrote from his Majesty's dictation a most polite speech, in which he regretted much that they were unable to converse except in writing, the language of dogs being difficult to understand. As for the writing, it had remained the same as the prince's own.

Manikin thereupon wrote a suitable reply, and then begged the king to satisfy his curiosity about all the strange things he had seen and heard since his landing. This appeared to awaken sad recollections in the king's mind, but he informed the prince that he was called King Bayard, and that a fairy, whose kingdom was next his own, had fallen violently in love with him and had done all she could to persuade him to marry her; but that he could not do so, as he himself was the devoted lover of the queen of the Spice Islands. Finally the fairy, furious at the indifference with which her love was treated, had reduced him to the state in which the prince found him, leaving him unchanged in mind, but deprived of the power of speech; and not content with wreaking her vengeance upon the king alone, she had condemned all his subjects to a similar fate, saying:

"Bark and run upon four feet until the time comes when virtue shall be rewarded by love and fortune."

This, however, as the poor king sadly remarked, was very much the same thing as if she had said: "Remain a spaniel forever and ever."

Prince Manikin was quite of the same opinion; nevertheless he said what we should all have said in the same circumstances:

"Your Majesty must have patience."

He was indeed deeply sorry for poor King Bayard, and said all the consoling things he could think of, promising to aid him with all his might if there was anything to be done. In short they became firm friends, and the king proudly displayed to Manikin the portrait of the queen of the Spice Islands, and he quite agreed that it was worth while to go through anything for the sake of a creature so lovely. Prince Manikin in his turn told his own history and the great undertaking upon which he had set out, and King Bayard was able to give him some valuable instructions as to which would be the best way for him to proceed, and then they went together to the place where the boat had been left. The sailors were delighted to see the prince again, though they had known that he was safe, and when they had taken on board all the supplies which the king had sent for them they started once more. The king and prince parted with much regret, and the former insisted that Manikin should take with him one of his own pages, named Mousta, who was charged to attend him everywhere and serve him faithfully, which he promised to do.

The wind being favorable they were soon out of hearing of the general howl of regret from the whole army, which had been given by order of the king as a great compliment, and it was not long before the land was entirely lost to view. They met with no further adventures worth speaking of, and presently found themselves within two leagues of the harbor for which they were making. The prince thought it would suit him better to land where he was, so as to avoid the town, since he had no money left and was very doubtful as to what he should do next. So the sailors set him and Mousta on shore and then

went back sorrowfully to their ship, while the prince and his attendant walked off in what looked to them the most promising direction. They soon reached a lovely green meadow on the border of a wood, which seemed to them so pleasant after their long voyage that they sat down to rest in the shade and amuse themselves by watching the gambols and antics of a pretty little monkey in the trees close by. The prince presently became so fascinated by it that he sprang up and tried to catch it, but it eluded his grasp and kept just out of arm's reach, until it had made him promise to follow wherever it led him, and then it sprang upon his shoulder and whispered in his ear:

"We have no money, my poor Manikin, and we are altogether badly off and at a loss to know what to do next."

"Yes, indeed," answered the prince ruefully, "and I have nothing to give you, no sugar or biscuits, or anything that you like, my pretty one."

"Since you are so thoughtful for me and so patient about your own affairs," said the little monkey, "I will show you the way to the Golden Rock, only you must leave Mousta to wait for you here."

Prince Manikin agreed willingly, and then the little monkey sprang from his shoulder to the nearest tree, and began to run through the wood from branch to branch, crying: "Follow me."

This the prince did not find so easy, but the little monkey waited for him and showed him the easiest places, until presently the wood grew thinner and they came out into a little clear grassy space at the foot of a mountain, in the midst of which stood a single rock about ten feet high. When they were quite close to it the little monkey said:

"This stone looks pretty hard, but give it a blow with your spear and let us see what will happen."

So the prince took his spear and gave the rock a vigorous dig, which split off several pieces, and showed that though the surface was thinly coated with stone, inside it was one solid mass of pure gold.

Thereupon the little monkey said, laughing at his astonishment:

"I make you a present of what you have broken off. Take as much of it as you think proper."

The prince thanked it gratefully and picked up one of the smallest of the lumps of gold. As he did so the little monkey was suddenly transformed into a tall and gracious lady, who said to him:

"If you are always as kind and persevering and easily contented as you are now you may hope to accomplish the most difficult tasks. Go on your way and have no fear that you will be troubled any more for lack of gold, for that little piece which you modestly chose shall never grow less, use it as much as you will. But that you may see the danger you have escaped by your moderation, come with me."

So saying, she led him back into the wood by a different path, and he saw that it was full of men and women. Their faces were pale and haggard, and they ran hither and thither seeking madly upon the ground or in the air, starting at every sound, pushing and trampling upon one another in their frantic eagerness to find the way to the Golden Rock.

"You see how they toil," said the fairy, "but it is all of no avail. They will end by dying of despair, as hundreds have done before them."

As soon as they had returned to the place where they had left Mousta, the fairy disappeared, and the prince and his faithful squire, who had greeted him with every demonstration of joy, took the nearest way to the city. Here they stayed several days, while the prince provided himself with horses and attendants and made many inquiries about Princess Sabella and the way to her kingdom, which was still so far away that he could hear little about it, and that of the vaguest description, but when he presently reached Mount Caucasus it was quite a different matter. Here they seemed to talk of nothing but the Princess Sabella, and strangers from all parts of the world were traveling toward her father's court.

The prince heard plenty of assurances as to her beauty and

her riches, but he also heard of the immense number of his rivals and their power. One brought an army at his back, another had vast treasures, a third was as handsome and accomplished as it was possible to be; while as to poor Manikin, he had nothing but his determination to succeed, his faithful spaniel, and his ridiculous name—which last was hardly likely to help him, but as he could not alter it he wisely determined not to think of it any more. After journeying for two whole months they came at last to Trelintin, the capital of the Princess Sabella's kingdom, and here he heard dismal stories about the Ice Mountain, and how none of those who had attempted to climb it had ever come back. He heard also the story of King Farda-Kinbras, Sabella's father. It appeared that he, being a rich and powerful monarch, had married a lovely princess named Birbantine, and they had been as happy as the day was long—so happy that as they were out sledging one day they were foolish enough to defy fate to spoil their happiness.

"We shall see about that," grumbled an old hag who sat by the wayside blowing her fingers to keep them warm. The king thereupon was very angry and wanted to punish the woman, but the queen prevented him, saying:

"Alas! sire, do not let us make bad worse. No doubt this is a fairy!"

"You are right there," said the old woman, and immediately she stood up, and as they gazed at her in horror she grew gigantic and terrible, her staff turned to a fiery dragon with outstretched wings, her ragged cloak to a golden mantle, and her wooden shoes to two bundles of rockets. "You are right there, and you will see what will come of your fine goings on and remember the fairy Gorgonzola!" So saying she mounted the dragon and flew off, the rockets shooting in all directions and leaving long trails of sparks.

In vain did Farda-Kinbras and Birbantine beg her to return and endeavor by their humble apologies to pacify her. She never so much as looked at them and was very soon out of sight, leaving them a prey to all kinds of dismal forebod-

ings. Very soon after this the queen had a little daughter, who was the most beautiful creature ever seen. All the fairies of the north were invited to her christening and warned against the malicious Gorgonzola. She also was invited, though she neither came to the banquet nor accepted her present; but as soon as all the others were seated at table, after bestowing their gifts upon the little princess, she stole into the palace, disguised as a black cat, and hid herself under the cradle until the nurses and the cradle-rockers had all turned their backs, and then she sprang out and in an instant had stolen the little princess's heart and made her escape, only being chased by a few dogs and scullions on her way across the courtyard. Once outside she mounted her chariot and flew straight away to the north pole, where she shut up her stolen treasure on the summit of the Ice Mountain, and surrounded it with so many difficulties that she felt quite easy about its remaining there as long as the princess lived, and then she went home, chuckling at her success. As to the other fairies, they went home after the banquet without discovering that anything was amiss, and so the king and queen were quite happy. Sabella grew prettier day by day. She learned everything a princess ought to know without the slightest trouble, and yet something always seemed lacking to make her perfectly charming. She had an exquisite voice, but whether her songs were grave or gay it did not matter—she did not seem to know what they meant; and every one who heard her said:

"She certainly sings perfectly; but there is no tenderness, no heart in her voice."

Poor Sabella! how could there be when her heart was far away on the Ice Mountain? And it was just the same with all the other things that she did. As time went on, in spite of the admiration of the whole court and the blind fondness of the king and queen, it became more and more evident that something was fatally wrong, for those who love no one cannot long be loved; and at last the king called a general assembly and invited the fairies to attend, that they might,

if possible, find out what was the matter. After explaining their grief as well as he could he ended by begging them to see the princess for themselves.

"It is certain," said he, "that something is wrong—what it is I don't know how to tell you, but in some way your work is imperfect."

They all assured him that so far as they knew everything had been done for the princess, and they had forgotten nothing that they could bestow on so good a neighbor as the king had been to them. After this they went to see Sabella; but they had no sooner entered her presence than they cried out with one accord:

"Oh! horror—she has no heart!"

On hearing this frightful announcement the king and queen gave a cry of despair and entreated the fairies to find some remedy for such an unheard-of misfortune. Thereupon the eldest fairy consulted her book of magic, which she always carried about with her, hung to her girdle by a thick silver chain, and there she found out at once that it was Gorgonzola who had stolen the princess's heart, and also discovered what the wicked old fairy had done with it.

"What shall we do? What shall we do?" cried the king and queen in one breath.

"You must certainly suffer much annoyance from seeing and loving Sabella, who is nothing but a beautiful image," replied the fairy, "and this must go on for a long time; but I think I see that in the end she will once more regain her heart. My advice is that you shall at once cause her portrait to be sent all over the world, and promise her hand and all her possessions to the prince who is successful in reaching her heart. Her beauty alone is sufficient to engage all the princes of the world in the quest."

This was accordingly done, and Prince Manikin heard that already five hundred princes had perished in the snow and ice, not to mention their squires and pages, and that more continued to arrive daily, eager to try their fortune. After some consideration he determined to present himself at court;

but his arrival made no stir, as his retinue was as inconsiderable as his stature, and the splendor of his rivals was great enough to throw even Farda-Kinbras himself into the shade. However, he paid his respects to the king very gracefully and asked permission to kiss the hand of the princess in the usual manner; but when he said he was called "Manikin" the king could hardly repress a smile, and the princess who stood by openly shouted with laughter.

Turning to the king, Prince Manikin said with great dignity:

"Pray laugh if it pleases your Majesty—I am glad that it is in my power to afford you any amusement; but I am not a plaything for these gentlemen, and I must beg them to dismiss any ideas of that kind from their minds at once." And with that he turned upon the one who had laughed the loudest and proudly challenged him to single combat. This prince, who was called Fadasse, accepted the challenge very scornfully, mocking at Manikin, who he felt sure had no chance against himself; but the meeting was arranged for the next day. When Prince Manikin quitted the king's presence he was conducted to the audience hall of the Princess Sabella. The sight of so much beauty and magnificence almost took his breath away for an instant, but, recovering himself with an effort, he said:

"Lovely princess, irresistibly drawn by the beauty of your portrait, I come from the other end of the world to offer my services to you. My devotion knows no bounds, but my absurd name has already involved me in a quarrel with one of your courtiers. To-morrow I am to fight this ugly, overgrown prince, and I beg you to honor the combat with your presence and prove to the world that there is nothing in a name, and that you deign to accept Manikin as your knight."

When it came to this the princess could not help being amused, for though she had no heart she was not without humor. She answered graciously that she accepted with pleasure, which encouraged the prince to entreat further that she would not show any favor to his adversary.

"Alas!" said she, "I favor none of these foolish people, who weary me with their sentiment and their folly. I do very well as I am, and yet from one year's end to another they talk of nothing but delivering me from some imaginary affliction. Not a word do I understand of all their pratings about love, and who knows what dull things besides, which, I declare to you, I cannot even remember."

Manikin was quick enough to gather from this speech that to amuse and interest the princess would be a far surer way of gaining her favor than to add himself to the list of those who continually teased her about that mysterious thing called "love" which she was so incapable of comprehending. So he began to talk of his rivals, and found in each of them something to make merry over, in which diversion the princess joined him heartily, and so well did he succeed in his attempt to amuse her that before very long she declared that of all the people at court he was the one to whom she preferred to talk.

The following day, at the time appointed for the combat, when the king, the queen, and the princess had taken their places and the whole court and the whole town were assembled to see the show, Prince Fadasse rode into the lists magnificently armed and accoutred, followed by twenty-four squires and a hundred men-at-arms, each one leading a splendid horse, while Prince Manikin entered from the other side armed only with his spear and followed by the faithful Mousta. The contrast between the two champions was so great that there was a shout of laughter from the whole assembly; but when at the sounding of a trumpet the combatants rushed upon each other, and Manikin, eluding the blow aimed at him, succeeded in thrusting Prince Fadasse from his horse and pinning him to the sand with his spear, it changed to a murmur of admiration.

So soon as he had him at his mercy, Manikin, turning to the princess, assured her that he had no desire to kill any one who called himself her courtier, and then he bade the furious and humiliated Fadasse rise and thank the princess, to whom he owed his life. Then, amid the sounding of the trumpets

and the shoutings of the people, he and Mousta retired gravely from the lists.

The king soon sent for him to congratulate him upon his success and to offer him a lodging in the palace, which he joyfully accepted; while the princess expressed a wish to have Mousta brought to her, and when the prince sent for him she was so delighted with his courtly manners and his marvelous intelligence that she entreated Manikin to give him to her for her own. The prince consented with alacrity, not only out of politeness, but because he foresaw that to have a faithful friend always near the princess might some day be of great service to him. All these events made Prince Manikin a person of much more consequence at the court. Very soon after there arrived upon the frontier the ambassador of a very powerful king, who sent to Farda-Kinbras the following letter, at the same time demanding permission to enter the capital in state to receive the answer:

"I, Brandatimor, to Farda-Kinbras send greeting. If I had before this time seen the portrait of your beautiful daughter Sabella I should not have permitted all these adventurers and petty princes to be dancing attendance and getting themselves frozen with the absurd idea of meriting her hand. For myself, I am not afraid of any rivals, and, now I have declared my intention of marrying your daughter, no doubt they will at once withdraw their pretensions. My ambassador has orders, therefore, to make arrangements for the princess to come and be married to me without delay—for I attach no importance at all to the farrago of nonsense which you have caused to be published all over the world about this Ice Mountain. If the princess really has no heart, be assured that I shall not concern myself about it, since, if anybody can help her to discover one, it is myself. My worthy father-in-law, farewell!"

The reading of this letter embarrassed and displeased Farda-Kinbras and Birbantine immensely, while the princess was fu-

rious at the insolence of the demand. They all three resolved that its contents must be kept a profound secret until they could decide what reply should be sent, but Mousta contrived to send word of all that had passed to Prince Manikin. He was naturally alarmed and indignant, and after thinking it over a little he begged an audience of the princess, and led the conversation so cunningly to the subject that was uppermost in her thoughts, as well as his own, that she presently told him all about the matter and asked his advice as to what it would be best to do. This was exactly what he had not been able to decide for himself. He replied that he should advise her to gain a little time by promising her answer after the grand entry of the ambassador, and this was accordingly done.

The ambassador did not at all like being put off after that fashion, but he was obliged to be content, and only said very arrogantly that so soon as his equipages arrived, as he expected they would do very shortly, he would give all the people of the city and the stranger princes with whom it was inundated an idea of the power and the magnificence of his master. Manikin, in despair, resolved that he would for once beg the assistance of the kind fairy Genesta. He often thought of her and always with gratitude, but from the moment of his setting out he had determined to seek her aid only on the greatest occasions. That very night, when he had fallen asleep quite worn out with thinking over all the difficulties of the situation, he dreamed that the fairy stood beside him and said:

"Manikin, you have done very well so far. Continue to please me and you shall always find good friends when you need them most. As for this affair with the ambassador, you can assure Sabella that she may look forward tranquilly to his triumphal entry, since it will all turn out well for her in the end."

The prince tried to throw himself at her feet to thank her, but woke to find it was all a dream. Nevertheless he took fresh courage, and went next day to see the princess, to whom he gave many mysterious assurances that all would yet be well. He even went so far as to ask her if she would not be very

grateful to any one who would rid her of the insolent Brandatimor, to which she replied that her gratitude would know no bounds. Then he wanted to know what would be her best wish for the person who was lucky enough to accomplish it. To which she said that she would wish them to be as insensible to the folly called "love" as she was herself!

This was indeed a crushing speech to make to such a devoted lover as Prince Manikin, but he concealed the pain it caused him with great courage.

And now the ambassador sent to say that on the very next day he would come in state to receive his answer, and from the earliest dawn the inhabitants were astir to secure the best places for the grand sight; but the good fairy Genesta was providing them an amount of amusement they were far from expecting, for she so enchanted the eyes of all the spectators that when the ambassador's gorgeous procession appeared, the splendid uniforms seemed to them miserable rags that a beggar would have been ashamed to wear, the prancing horses appeared as wretched skeletons hardly able to drag one leg after the other, while their trappings, which really sparkled with gold and jewels, looked like old sheepskins that would not have been good enough for a plow-horse. The pages resembled the ugliest sweeps. The trumpets gave no more sound than whistles made of onion-stalks or combs wrapped in paper; while the train of fifty carriages looked no better than fifty donkey-carts. In the last of these sat the ambassador with the haughty and scornful air which he considered becoming in the representative of so powerful a monarch; for this was the crowning point of the absurdity of the whole procession, that all who took part in it wore the expression of vanity and self-satisfaction and pride at their own appearance and all their surroundings which they believed their splendor amply justified.

The laughter and howls of derision from the whole crowd rose ever louder and louder as the extraordinary train advanced, and at last reached the ears of the king as he waited in the audience hall, and before the procession reached the palace he had been informed of its nature, and supposing that it must

be intended as an insult he ordered the gates to be closed. You may imagine the fury of the ambassador when, after all his pomp and pride, the king absolutely and unaccountably refused to receive him. He raved wildly both against king and people, and the train retired in great confusion, jeered at and pelted with stones and mud by the enraged crowd. It is needless to say that he left the country as fast as horses could carry him, but not before he had declared war, with the most terrible menaces threatening to devastate the country with fire and sword.

Some days after this disastrous embassy King Bayard sent courtiers to Prince Manikin with a most friendly letter, offering his services in any difficulty and inquiring with the deepest interest how he fared.

Manikin at once replied, relating all that had happened since they parted, not forgetting to mention the event which had just involved Farda-Kinbras and Brandatimor in this deadly quarrel, and he ended by entreating his faithful friend to despatch a few thousands of his veteran spaniels to his assistance.

Neither the king, the queen, nor the princess could in the least understand the amazing conduct of Brandatimor's ambassador. Nevertheless the preparations for the war went forward briskly, and all the princes who had not gone on toward the Ice Mountain offered their services, at the same time demanding all the best appointments in the king's army. Manikin was one of the first to volunteer, but he only asked to go as aide-de-camp to the commander-in-chief, who was a gallant soldier and celebrated for his victories. As soon as the army could be got together it was marched to the frontier, where it met the opposing force headed by Brandatimor himself, who was full of fury, determined to avenge the insult to his ambassador and to possess himself of the Princess Sabella. All the army of Farda-Kinbras could do, being so heavily outnumbered, was to act upon the defensive, and before long Manikin won the esteem of the officers for his ability and of the soldiers for his courage and care for their welfare, and in all the skir-

mishes which he conducted he had the good fortune to vanquish the enemy.

At last Brandatimor engaged the whole army in a terrific conflict, and though the troops of Farda-Kinbras fought with desperate courage, their general was killed and they were defeated and forced to retreat with immense loss. Manikin did wonders, and half a dozen times turned the retreating forces and beat back the enemy; and he afterward collected troops enough to keep them in check until the severe winter setting in put an end to hostilities for a while.

He then returned to the court, where consternation reigned. The king was in despair at the death of his trusty general, and ended by imploring Manikin to take the command of the army, and his counsel was followed in all the affairs of the court. He followed up his former plan of amusing the princess and on no account reminding her of that tedious thing called "love," so that she was always glad to see him, and the winter slipped by gaily for both of them.

The prince was all the while secretly making plans for the next campaign. He received private intelligence of the arrival of a strong reinforcement of spaniels, to whom he sent orders to post themselves along the frontier without attracting attention, and as soon as he possibly could he held a consultation with their commander, who was an old and experienced warrior. Following his advice, he decided to have a pitched battle as soon as the enemy advanced, and this Brandatimor lost not a moment in doing, as he was perfectly persuaded that he was now going to make an end of the war and utterly vanquish Farda-Kinbras. But no sooner had he given the order to charge than the spaniels, who had mingled with his troops unperceived, leaped each upon the horse nearest to him, and not only threw the whole squadron into confusion by the terror they caused, but, springing at the throats of the riders, unhorsed many of them by the suddenness of their attack; then turning the horses to the rear, they spread consternation everywhere and made it easy for Prince Manikin to gain a complete victory. He met Brandatimor in single combat and succeeded

in taking him prisoner; but he did not live to reach the court, to which Manikin had sent him. His pride killed him at the thought of appearing before Sabella under these altered circumstances.

In the mean time Prince Fadasse and all the others who had remained behind were setting out with all speed for the conquest of the Ice Mountain, being afraid that Prince Manikin might prove as successful in that as he seemed to be in everything else, and when Manikin returned he heard of it with great annoyance. True he had been serving the princess, but she only admired and praised him for his gallant deeds, and seemed no whit nearer bestowing on him the love he so ardently desired, and all the comfort Mousta could give him on the subject was that at least she loved no one else, and with that he had to content himself. But he determined that, come what might, he would delay no longer, but attempt the great undertaking for which he had come so far. When he went to take leave of the king and queen they entreated him not to go, as they had just heard that Prince Fadasse and all who accompanied him had perished in the snow; but he persisted in his resolve. As for Sabella, she gave him her hand to kiss with precisely the same gracious indifference as she had given it to him the first time they met. It happened that this farewell took place before the whole court, and so great a favorite had Prince Manikin become that they were all indignant at the coldness with which the princess treated him.

Finally the king said to him:

"Prince, you have constantly refused all the gifts which, in my gratitude for your invaluable services, I have offered to you, but I wish the princess to present you with her cloak of marten's fur, and that I hope you will not reject!"

Now, this was a splendid fur mantle which the princess was very fond of wearing, not so much because she felt cold as that its richness set off to perfection the delicate tints of her complexion and the brilliant gold of her hair. However, she took it off and with graceful politeness begged Prince Manikin to accept it, which you may be sure he was charmed to do, and

taking only this and a little bundle of all kinds of wood, and accompanied only by two spaniels out of the fifty who had stayed with him when the war was ended, he set forth, receiving many tokens of love and favor from the people in every town he passed through. At the last little village he left his horse behind him, to begin his toilsome march through the snow, which extended, blank and terrible, in every direction as far as the eye could see. Here he had appointed to meet the other forty-eight spaniels, who received him joyfully and assured him that, happen what might, they would follow and serve him faithfully. And so they started, full of heart and hope. At first there was a slight track, difficult but not impossible to follow; but this was soon lost and the pole-star was their only guide.

When the time came to call a halt the prince, who had after much consideration decided on his plan of action, caused a few twigs from the fagot he had brought with him to be planted in the snow, and then he sprinkled over them a pinch of the magic powder he had collected from the enchanted boat. To his great joy they instantly began to sprout and grow, and in a marvelously short time the camp was surrounded by a perfect grove of trees of all sorts, which blossomed and bore ripe fruit, so that all their wants were easily supplied and they were able to make huge fires to warm themselves. The prince then sent out several spaniels to reconnoiter, and they had the good luck to discover a horse laden with provisions stuck fast in the snow. They at once fetched their comrades and brought the spoil triumphantly into the camp, and as it consisted principally of biscuits, not a spaniel among them went supperless to sleep. In this way they journeyed by day and encamped safely at night, always remembering to take on a few branches to provide them with food and shelter. They passed by the way armies of those who had set out upon the perilous enterprise, who stood frozen stiffly, without sense or motion; but Prince Manikin strictly forbade that any attempt should be made to thaw them.

So they went on and on for more than three months, and day by day the Ice Mountain, which they had seen for a long

time, grew clearer, until at last they stood close to it, and shuddered at its height and steepness. But by patience and perseverance they crept up foot by foot, aided by their fires of magic wood, without which they must have perished in the intense cold, until presently they stood at the gates of the magnificent ice palace which crowned the mountain, where, in deadly silence and icy sleep, lay the heart of Sabella. Now the difficulty became immense, for if they maintained enough heat to keep themselves alive they were in danger every moment of melting the blocks of solid ice of which the palace was entirely built and bringing the whole structure down upon their heads; but cautiously and quickly they traversed courtyards and halls, until they found themselves at the foot of a vast throne, where, upon a cushion of snow, lay an enormous and brilliantly sparkling diamond, which contained the heart of the lovely Princess Sabella. Upon the lowest step of the throne was inscribed in icy letters: "Whosoever thou art who by courage and virtue canst win the heart of Sabella, enjoy peacefully the good fortune which thou hast richly deserved."

Prince Manikin bounded forward and had just strength left to grasp the precious diamond which contained all he coveted in the world before he fell insensible upon the snowy cushion. But his good spaniels lost no time in rushing to the rescue, and between them they bore him hastily from the hall, and not a moment too soon, for all around them they heard the clang of the falling blocks of ice as the fairy palace slowly collapsed under the unwonted heat. Not until they reached the foot of the mountain did they pause to restore the prince to consciousness, and then his joy to find himself the possessor of Sabella's heart knew no bounds.

With all speed they began to retrace their steps, but this time the happy prince could not bear the sight of his defeated and disappointed rivals, whose frozen forms lined his triumphant way. He gave orders to his spaniels to spare no pains to restore them to life, and so successful were they that day by day his train increased, so that by the time he re-

turned to the little village where he had left his horse he was escorted by five hundred sovereign princes and knights and squires without number, and he was so courteous and unassuming that they all followed him willingly, anxious to do him honor. But then he was so happy and blissful himself that he found it easy to be at peace with all the world.

It was not long before he met the faithful Mousta, who was coming at the top of his speed hoping to meet the prince, that he might tell him of the sudden and wonderful change that had come over the princess, who had become gentle and thoughtful and had talked to him of nothing but Prince Manikin, of the hardships she feared he might be suffering, and of her anxiety for him, and all this with a hundred tender expressions which put the finishing stroke to the prince's delight. Then came a courier bearing the congratulations of the king and queen, who had just heard of his successful return, and there was even a graceful compliment from Sabella herself. The prince sent Mousta back to her, and he was welcomed with joy, for was he not her lover's present?

At last the travelers reached the capital and were received with regal magnificence. Farda-Kinbras and Birbantine embraced Prince Manikin, declaring that they regarded him as their heir and the future husband of the princess, to which he replied that they did him too much honor. And then he was admitted into the presence of the princess, who for the first time in her life blushed as he kissed her hand and could not find a word to say. But the prince, throwing himself on his knees beside her, held out the splendid diamond, saying:

"Madam, this treasure is yours, since none of the dangers and difficulties I have gone through have been sufficient to make me deserve it."

"Ah! prince," said she, "if I take it, it is only that I may give it back to you, since truly it belongs to you already."

At this moment in came the king and queen, and interrupted them by asking all the questions imaginable, and not infrequently the same over and over again. It seems that there is always one thing that is sure to be said about an event

by everybody, and Prince Manikin found that the question which he was asked by more than a thousand people on this particular occasion was:

"And didn't you find it very cold?"

The king had come to request Prince Manikin and the princess to follow him to the council chamber, which they did, not knowing that he meant to present the prince to all the nobles assembled there as his son-in-law and successor. But when Manikin perceived his intention, he begged permission to speak first and told his whole story, even to the fact that he believed himself to be a peasant's son. Scarcely had he finished speaking when the sky grew black, the thunder growled, and the lightning flashed, and in the blaze of light the good fairy Genesta suddenly appeared. Turning to Prince Manikin, she said:

"I am satisfied with you, since you have shown not only courage, but a good heart." Then she addressed King Farda-Kinbras and informed him of the real history of the prince, and how she had determined to give him the education she knew would be best for a man who was to command others. "You have already found the advantage of having a faithful friend," she added to the prince, "and now you will have the pleasure of seeing King Bayard and his subjects regain their natural forms as a reward for his kindness to you."

Just then arrived a chariot drawn by eagles, which proved to contain the foolish king and queen, who embraced their long-lost son with great joy, and were greatly struck with the fact that they did indeed find him covered with fur! While they were caressing Sabella and wringing her hands (which is a favorite form of endearment with foolish people) chariots were seen approaching from all points of the compass containing numbers of fairies.

"Sire," said Genesta to Farda-Kinbras, "I have taken the liberty of appointing your court as a meeting-place for all the fairies who could spare the time to come; and I hope you can arrange to hold the great ball, which we have once in a hundred years, on this occasion."

The king having suitably acknowledged the honor done him was next reconciled to Gorgonzola, and they two presently opened the ball together. The fairy Marsontine restored their natural forms to King Bayard and all his subjects, and he appeared once more as handsome a king as you could wish to see. One of the fairies immediately despatched her chariot for the Queen of the Spice Islands, and their wedding took place at the same time as that of Prince Manikin and the lovely and gracious Sabella. They lived happily ever afterward, and their vast kingdoms were presently divided between their children.

The prince, out of grateful remembrance of the Princess Sabella's first gift to him, bestowed the right of bearing her name upon the most beautiful of the martens, and that is why they are called sables to this day.

# *The Gold Bread*

ONCE upon a time there was a widow who had a beautiful daughter. The mother was modest and humble; the daughter, Marienka, was pride itself. She had suitors from all sides, but none satisfied her; the more they tried to please her, the more she disdained them.

One night, when the poor mother could not sleep, she took her beads and began to pray for her dear child, who gave her more than one care. Marienka was asleep by her side. As the mother gazed lovingly at her beautiful daughter, Marienka laughed in her sleep.

"What a beautiful dream she must have to laugh in this way!" said the mother. Then she finished her prayer, hung her beads on the wall, laid her head on the same pillow with her daughter, and fell asleep.

"My dear child," said she in the morning, "what did you dream last night that you laughed so?"

"What did I dream, mama? I dreamed that a nobleman came here for me in a copper coach, and that he put a ring on my finger set with a stone that sparkled like the stars. And when I entered the church, the people had eyes for no one but the blessed Virgin and me."

"My daughter, my daughter, that was a proud dream!" said the mother, shaking her head. But Marienka went out singing.

The same day a wagon entered the yard. A handsome young farmer in good circumstances came to ask Marienka to share a peasant's bread with him. The mother was pleased with the suitor, but the proud Marienka refused him, saying, "Though you should come in a copper coach, and put a ring

on my finger set with a stone that sparkled like the stars, I would not have you for a husband." And the farmer went away storming at Marienka's pride.

The next night the mother waked, took her beads, and prayed still more earnestly for her daughter, when behold! Marienka laughed again as she was sleeping.

"I wonder what she is dreaming," said the mother, who prayed, unable to sleep.

"My dear child," she said the next morning, "what did you dream last night that you laughed aloud?"

"What did I dream, mama? I dreamed that a nobleman came here for me in a silver coach, and that he offered me a golden diadem. And when I entered the church, the people looked at me more than they did at the blessed Virgin."

"Hush! you are blaspheming. Pray, my daughter, pray that you may not fall into temptation."

But Marienka ran away to escape her mother's sermon.

The same day a carriage entered the yard. A young lord came to entreat Marienka to share a nobleman's bread with him.

"It is a great honor," said the mother; but vanity is blind.

"Though you should come in a silver coach," said Marienka to the new suitor, "and should offer me a golden diadem, I would not have you for a husband."

"Take care, my child," said the poor mother; "pride is a device of the Evil One."

"Mothers never know what they are saying," thought Marienka, and she went out shrugging her shoulders.

The third night the mother could not sleep for anxiety. As she lay awake, praying for her daughter, behold! Marienka burst into a loud fit of laughter.

"Oh!" said the mother, "what can the unhappy child be dreaming now?" And she continued to pray till daylight.

"My dear child," said she in the morning, "what did you dream last night?"

"You will be angry again if I tell you," answered Marienka.

"No, no," replied the mother; "tell me."

"I dreamed that a noble lord, with a great train of attendants, came to ask me in marriage. He was in a golden coach, and he brought me a dress of gold lace. And when I entered the church, the people looked at nobody but me."

The mother clasped her hands. Marienka, half dressed, sprang from the bed and ran into the next room, to avoid a lecture that was tiresome to her.

The same day three coaches entered the yard, one of copper, one of silver, and one of gold, the first drawn by two horses, the second by four, and the third by eight, all caparisoned with gold and pearls. From the copper and silver coaches alighted pages dressed in scarlet breeches and green jackets and cloaks, while from the golden coach stepped a handsome nobleman all dressed in gold. He entered the house, and, bending one knee on the ground, asked the mother for her daughter's hand.

"What an honor!" thought the mother.

"My dream has come to pass," said Marienka. "You see, mother, that, as usual, I was right and you were wrong."

She ran to her chamber, tied the betrothal knot, and offered it smilingly as a pledge of her faith to the handsome lord, who, on his side, put a ring on her finger set with a stone that sparkled like the stars, and presented her with a golden diadem and a dress of gold lace.

The proud girl ran to her room to dress for the ceremony, while the mother, still anxious, said to the bridegroom, "My good sir, what bread do you offer my daughter?"

"Among us," said he, "the bread is of copper, silver, and gold: she can take her choice."

"What does this mean?" thought the mother. But Marienka had no anxiety; she returned as beautiful as the sun, took her lover's arm, and set out for the church without asking her mother's blessing. The poor woman was left to pray alone on the threshold; and when Marienka returned and entered the carriage, she did not even turn round to look at her mother or to bid her a last farewell.

The eight horses set off at a gallop, and did not stop till

they reached a huge rock, in which was a hole as large as the gate of a city. The horses plunged into the darkness, the earth trembled, and the rock cracked and crumbled. Marienka seized her husband's hand.

"Don't be alarmed, my fair one; in a moment it will be light."

All at once a thousand lights waved in the air. The dwarfs of the mountain, each with a torch in his hand, came to salute their lord, the King of the Mines. Marienka learned for the first time her husband's name. Whether he was a spirit of good or evil, at least he was so rich that she did not regret her choice.

They emerged from the darkness, and advanced through bleached forests and mountains that raised their pale and gloomy summits to the skies. Firs, beeches, birches, oaks, rocks, all were of lead. At the end of the forest stretched a vast meadow, the grass of which was of silver; and at the bottom of the meadow was a castle of gold, inlaid with diamonds and rubies. The carriage stopped before the door, and the King of the Mines offered his hand to his bride, saying, "My fair one, all that you see is yours."

Marienka was delighted. But it was impossible to make so long a journey without being hungry; and it was with pleasure, therefore, that she saw the mountain dwarfs bring in a table, everything on which glittered with gold, silver, and precious stones. The dishes were marvelous—side-dishes of emeralds, and roasts of gold on silver salvers. Every one ate heartily except the bride, who begged her husband for a little bread.

"Bring the copper bread," said the King of the Mines.

Marienka could not eat it.

"Bring the silver bread," said he.

Marienka could not eat it.

"Bring the gold bread," said he, at length.

Marienka could not eat it.

"My fair one," said the King of the Mines," I am very sorry; but what can I offer you? We have no other bread."

The bride burst into tears. Her husband laughed aloud: his heart was of metal, like his kingdom.

"Weep, if you like," he cried; "it will do you no good. What you wished for you possess: eat the bread that you have chosen."

It was thus that the rich Marienka lived in her castle, dying of hunger, and seeking in vain for a root to allay the torture that was consuming her. God had humbled her by granting her prayer.

Three days in the year, the Rogation Days, when the ground half opens to receive the fruitful rain sent by the Lord, Marienka returns to the earth. Dressed in rags, pale and wrinkled, she begs from door to door, too happy when any one throws her a few crusts, and when she receives as alms from the poor what she lacks in her palace of gold—a little bread and a little pity.

# *The Silver Penny*

MARZI had been a soldier for many years, and was much beloved by his comrades, for he was as merry as he was brave, and generous almost to a fault; but, unfortunately, the king under whom this popular soldier served never went to war with any of his neighbors; so, seeing that he was not likely to make a career in the army, Marzi determined to buy his discharge and to return to his relations.

He arrived at home to find that his father was just dead, and his goods were in the act of being divided among his heirs. Although the soldier had never expected a large inheritance, still he was a good deal surprised to receive as his portion nothing more nor less than a silver penny. But he accepted this fresh stroke of ill luck as cheerfully as he had done every other; and, turning his back on his old home, he set out on his travels very little richer than when he returned to his father's house.

He wandered on for some time through field and meadow, till he reached a wood. Here he was stopped by a poor old beggar with gray hair, who begged him pitifully for alms. Without a moment's thought, Marzi plunged his hand into his pocket, and presented the old man on the spot with his whole inheritance.

The beggar thanked him gratefully, and said:

"Your generosity shall be richly rewarded. Joy and blessing shall follow you wherever you go. Only speak, and whatever you wish shall be granted to you."

Marzi was much astonished at the old man's words, but answered promptly:

"Since it is only to wish I have, I would rather have the

power of changing myself at will into a dove, into a hare, and into a salmon, than anything else in the world."

"Your desire is granted," said the beggar. "Go your way, and think sometimes of me." And hardly had he said these words than he vanished.

The sudden apparition and the strange words of the old beggar so filled the soldier's mind that he never noticed that he had passed over the boundary of his native country. Before sunset Marzi found himself in a strange capital, where all was uproar and merriment; and in the midst of dancing and singing, soldiers in glittering uniforms were persuading young men to enlist in the army, for the king of the country had entangled himself in a war, and had not enough men to carry it on successfully.

The smart appearance of the recruiting-sergeants, their fine uniforms, the glittering heaps of shillings on the table round which the crowd danced, together with the sound of fiddles and the clinking of glasses, delighted the soldier so much that, in spite of his fatigue, he joined the dancing and merrymaking, and drank one glass after another to the king's health. Before he knew what he had done he had a shako with a waving plume on his head, and a silver shilling in his pocket.

The next day he found himself once more installed in his former life, and soon after his regiment was ordered to advance and attack the enemy.

As Marzi was a very fine-looking man, and knew his duty well, he was very soon selected for the king's bodyguard. But this mark of favor made him many enemies among the other soldiers, for they did not see why a stranger who had not distinguished himself in the king's service should be chosen before them.

Now the king had once upon a time been given a magic ring, which made its possessor invincible while he wore it. Unfortunately it happened that just at this crisis when it would have been of most use to him—for his foe was a very formidable one—the king found that he had left his ring at home. The enemy's army marched against him, and fell on his men so sud-

denly that he was obliged to retreat in order to assemble fresh troops, and although he soon filled up his ranks, and led them once more against the foe, keeping up the spirits of his soldiers by his own brave example and by dazzling promises for the future, his efforts were fruitless. His hitherto unfailing luck seemed to have utterly deserted him, and his adherents, suddenly becoming aware of their evil plight, saw that they would soon be completely defeated and taken prisoners, along with their leader.

Then the king called out in despair: "The man who fetches me my ring before we are overpowered by the enemy shall have the hand of my only daughter as his reward."

But the danger that threatened them was so immediate, and the distance from the capital so great, that the quickest rider would not trust himself to be back in time, for at the very shortest it would take seven days and seven nights to cross the rivers and mountains and plains that separated the capital from the camp. Every one was fully aware of this, and no one offered to attempt the ride.

Then Marzi, remembering the three magic gifts the old beggar had endowed him with, stepped forward, and, saluting the king, he said, "Your Majesty shall have your ring immediately, and then I beg you will remember your promise"; and in a moment he shook himself and fled as fast as lightning through the tents of the warriors in the shape of a hare. He ran so quickly that the dust rose in great clouds behind him, which astonished every one not a little.

Soon he came to a broad river, where he shook himself again, and swam across it in the shape of a silver salmon, and when he had reached the other side he shook himself once more, and flew in the shape of a dove, quicker than the wind, over hill and dale. Before the king in his camp could have dreamed it possible, Marzi had reached the palace; and flying through an open window into the room of the beautiful princess, he perched upon her knee.

The king's daughter caressed the tame dove, and was giving it milk and sugar, when suddenly it shook its feathers violently,

and Marzi in his own natural form stood before the astonished eyes of the princess. He told her at once for what purpose he had come, and when she had heard his story she was delighted to think she was to have such a brave and handsome soldier for a husband.

She gave him the wonderful talisman, and warned him at the same time to beware, on his return to the camp, of the envy and jealousy of his comrades.

For fear he should be robbed of the ring on his way back, or lest any other misfortune should happen to him, Marzi begged the princess to keep three tokens of him to show the king. Then he shook himself, and became a dove once more, which perched on her knee, and said:

> " Princess fair, before me kneel,
> And from my wings two feathers steal."

The princess did as she was bid, and pulled two beautiful feathers out of the dove's wings. When she had done so the dove shook itself, and a lovely silver salmon lay before her, and said:

> " Princess, with your finger-nails
> Scrape off eight of my silver scales."

And the princess took eight lovely silver scales from the fish's back. In a moment the salmon shook itself also, and turned into a hare, which said:

> " Princess mine, yet one demand—
> Cut off my tail with your own fair hand."

The princess took a pair of scissors and cut the hare's tail off, and put all three tokens in a little box, which she placed under lock and key among her other treasures. In the mean time the hare had shaken itself, and, standing once more in his proper character before her, Marzi bade the princess a tender farewell.

Thereupon he again changed himself into a dove, and seiz-

ing the magic ring in his beak, flew with all haste out of the window. The long journey back to the camp, together with the weight of the ring, tired the poor little creature dreadfully; but it put forth all its strength, and flew cheerfully in the direction of the camp, where the king sat eagerly awaiting Marzi's return. But just as the dove came in sight of the camp a wind suddenly arose, and beat so violently against its wings that it was obliged to give up flying, and turn itself into a hare. Then, taking the ring between its teeth, it ran as fast as its legs could carry it, till it was close on the king's tent.

But Marzi soon found out that the princess's fears had not been groundless. One of his comrades, who had seen him run away in the shape of a hare, was so filled with jealousy that he determined to waylay the gallant soldier on his way back, and to seize from him the magic ring which he had promised the king. He hid himself, therefore, behind a bush, and when the hare passed by he shot it on the spot, and taking the ring out of its mouth, he brought it to the king, who was greatly delighted at getting his magic talisman again, and repeated once more the reward he had promised to the bringer.

Hardly an hour had passed when the fortune of war changed, and success was henceforward on the king's side. The enemy's army was vanquished, their prince slain, all the weapons of war and many costly treasures were captured, and the whole country was conquered with very little difficulty.

When the war was over, the king set forth with his army to his own country, and arrived at his capital amid the joyful acclamation of his people. The princess rejoiced greatly over his return, but her eyes sought in vain, among the ranks of brave warriors who assembled round the palace waving their triumphant banners, for her bridegroom.

But now the king advanced to meet her, and leading Marzi's murderer before her, said:

"Here is he to whom I have promised your hand—the brave soldier who brought me the ring. To-morrow your wedding shall be celebrated at the same time as a feast in honor of our conquest."

When the princess heard these words she burst out crying, and didn't cease all day or night. So unhappy was she that she became very ill. But she never revealed the cause of her suffering to any one, only she steadily refused to take any nourishment, and she never stopped crying for a minute, in consequence of which both the wedding and banquet had to be put off. Day after day the king grew more alarmed; the suffering of his daughter made him very unhappy, and neither he nor the doctors could discover the cause of it.

In the mean time Marzi was lying on the ground, and was very nearly becoming food for the crows, when one day the old beggar who had given him the three magic gifts in exchange for his silver penny happened to come along the field, and found the poor little hare lying stiff and stark on the ground. He recognized Marzi at once, and said:

"Hare, get up and live again. Shake yourself, and go as fast as your legs will carry you to the palace, for another stands there in your place. Make haste, or you will be too late."

Then the hare sprang up alive and well, and hastened with all its might over moor and heath, and when it came to the banks of the broad river it turned itself into a silver salmon and swam across. Then it transformed itself once more into a dove, and flew swiftly over hill and dale till it reached the king's palace. Here it shook itself, and Marzi the soldier stood once more in his sovereign's presence. But the king wouldn't listen to his story, and told him that he was telling a lie, at the same time confronting him with the man who had brought the magic ring.

This encounter so upset Marzi that he could hardly restrain his tears; but he plucked up courage, and said:

"Grant me, gracious king, leave to prove to you that I am no impostor, and have spoken the truth. Let the princess be called, and hear from her lips who is her rightful bridegroom, I or that deceiver!"

The king looked at him narrowly as he said these words, and as he looked he remembered that it was Marzi and no other who had offered to go and fetch the ring; but he said nothing,

and led the poor soldier at once into the presence of the princess.

They found the princess still in the deepest grief; but the moment her eye lighted on Marzi she sprang up and ran joyfully toward him, crying:

"Here is my real bridegroom; it was to him I gave the ring, and to him alone the defeat of the enemy was due."

This declaration astonished every one greatly. The king was much embarrassed as to how he was to act, for he knew only that one of the men had offered to bring the ring, and that the other had actually brought it.

Then the princess went and got her box in which she had treasured up Marzi's tokens, and said to her father: "Command the rivals to change themselves in turn into a dove, a salmon, and a hare."

The king did as she asked, but the false bridegroom stood motionless, as if paralyzed by fear and terror.

But of a sudden Marzi shook himself, and changing into a dove, he perched on the princess's knee, and said:

"Princess dear, put my feathers back;
One in each wing you'll find I lack."

Then the princess took the two feathers out of her box and stuck them into the dove's wings so that every one saw they belonged to the bird.

In a minute the dove had shaken itself, and a silver salmon lay in its place, which said:

"Now, sweet princess, one boon I crave—
Put back the silver scales I gave."

And the princess took the eight silver scales, and all eyes could see that they came off the fish's back. Finally, the salmon shook itself and sprang in the form of a hare to the princess's feet, and said:

"My bride so sweet, princess so fair,
Give up the tail of the little hare."

Then every one saw with their own eyes that the hare had lost its tail, and that the one the princess took out of her little box fitted it exactly. And, last of all, the hare shook itself also, and Marzi stood before them all in his natural form.

As soon as the king had heard his story, he had the false bridegroom caught and hung on the nearest gallows. The very next day the princess was married to her brave soldier; and never was there such a merry wedding. The king presented the kingdom he had conquered to Marzi, who was crowned king, and they all lived peacefully and happily to the end of their lives.

# *The Gold-Spinners*

ONCE upon a time, in a large forest, there lived an old woman and three maidens. They were all three beautiful, but the youngest was the fairest. Their hut was quite hidden by trees, and none saw their beauty but the sun by day, the moon by night, and the eyes of the stars. The old woman kept the girls hard at work, from morning till night, spinning gold flax into yarn, and when one distaff was empty another was given them, so that they had no rest. The thread had to be fine and even, and when done was locked up in a secret chamber by the old woman, who twice or thrice every summer went a journey. Before she went she gave out work for each day of her absence, and always returned in the night, so that the girls never saw what she brought back with her, neither would she tell them whence the gold flax came nor what it was to be used for.

Now, when the time came round for the old woman to set out on one of these journeys, she gave each maiden work for six days, with the usual warning: "Children, don't let your eyes wander, and on no account speak to a man, for if you do your thread will lose its brightness and misfortunes of all kinds will follow." They laughed at this oft-repeated caution, saying to each other: "How can our gold thread lose its brightness, and have we any chance of speaking to a man?"

On the third day after the old woman's departure a young prince, hunting in the forest, got separated from his companions and completely lost. Weary of seeking his way he flung himself down under a tree, leaving his horse to browse at will, and fell asleep.

The sun had set when he awoke and began once more to try

and find his way out of the forest. At last he perceived a narrow foot-path, which he eagerly followed and found that it led him to a small hut. The maidens, who were sitting at the door of their hut for coolness, saw him approaching, and the two elder were much alarmed, for they remembered the old woman's warning; but the youngest said: "Never before have I seen any one like him; let me have one look." The elder ones entreated her to come in, but seeing that she would not, left her, and the prince, coming up, courteously greeted the maiden, and told her he had lost his way in the forest and was both hungry and weary. She set food before him, and was so delighted with his conversation that she forgot the old woman's caution and lingered for hours. In the mean time the prince's companions sought him far and wide, but to no purpose, so they sent two messengers to tell the sad news to the king, who immediately ordered a regiment of cavalry and one of infantry to go and look for him.

After three days' search they found the hut. The prince was still sitting by the door and had been so happy in the maiden's company that the time had seemed like a single hour. Before leaving he promised to return and fetch her to his father's court, where he would make her his bride. When he had gone she sat down to her wheel to make up for lost time, but was dismayed to find that her thread had lost all its brightness. Her heart beat fast and she wept bitterly, for she remembered the old woman's warning and knew not what misfortune might now befall her.

The old woman returned in the night and knew by the tarnished thread what had happened in her absence. She was furiously angry and told the maiden that she had brought down misery both on herself and on the prince. The maiden could not rest for thinking of this. At last she could bear it no longer and resolved to seek help from the prince.

As a child she had learned to understand the speech of birds, and this was now of great use to her, for seeing a raven pluming itself on a pine bough, she cried softly to it: "Dear bird, cleverest of all birds, as well as swiftest of wing,

wilt thou help me?" "How can I help thee?" asked the raven. She answered: "Fly away until thou comest to a splendid town where stands a king's palace; seek out the king's son and tell him that a great misfortune has befallen me." Then she told the raven how her thread had lost its brightness, how terribly angry the old woman was, and how she feared some great disaster. The raven promised faithfully to do her bidding, and spreading its wings flew away. The maiden now went home and worked hard all day at winding up the yarn her elder sisters had spun, for the old woman would let her spin no longer. Toward evening she heard the raven's "Craa, craa" from the pine-tree and eagerly hastened thither to hear the answer.

By great good fortune the raven had found a wind wizard's son in the palace garden who understood the speech of birds, and to him he had intrusted the message. When the prince heard it he was very sorrowful, and took counsel with his friends how to free his sweetheart. Then he said to the wind wizard's son: "Beg the raven to fly quickly back to the maiden and tell her to be ready on the ninth night, for then will I come and fetch her away." The wind wizard's son did this, and the raven flew so swiftly that it reached the hut that same evening. The maiden thanked the bird heartily and went home, telling no one what she had heard.

As the ninth night drew near she became very unhappy, for she feared lest some terrible mischance should arise and ruin all. On the ninth night she crept out of the house and waited trembling at some little distance from the hut. Presently she heard the muffled tramp of horses, and soon the armed troop appeared, led by the prince, who had prudently marked all the trees beforehand, in order to know the way. When he saw the maiden he sprang from his horse, lifted her into the saddle, and then, mounting behind, rode homeward. The moon shone so brightly that they had no difficulty in seeing the marked trees.

By and by the coming dawn loosened the tongues of all the birds, and had the prince only known what they were

saying, or the maiden been listening, they might have been spared much sorrow, but they were thinking only of each other, and when they came out of the forest the sun was high in the heavens.

Next morning, when the youngest girl did not come to her work, the old woman asked where she was. The sisters pretended not to know, but the old woman easily guessed what had happened, and as she was in reality a wicked witch, determined to punish the fugitives. Accordingly, she collected nine different kinds of enchanters' nightshade, added some salt, which she first bewitched, and doing all up in a cloth into the shape of a fluffy ball, sent it after them on the wings of the wind, saying:

"Whirlwind!—mother of the wind!
Lend thy aid 'gainst her who sinned!
Take with thee this magic ball.
Cast her from his arms forever,
Bury her in the rippling river."

At midday the prince and his men came to a deep river, spanned by so narrow a bridge that only one rider could cross at a time. The horse on which the prince and the maiden were riding had just reached the middle when the magic ball flew by. The horse in its fright suddenly reared, and before any one could stop it flung the maiden into the swift current below. The prince tried to jump in after her, but his men held him back, and in spite of his struggles led him home. where for six weeks he shut himself up in a secret chamber, and would neither eat nor drink, so great was his grief. At last he became so ill that his life was despaired of, and in great alarm the king caused all the wizards of his country to be summoned. But none could cure him. At last the wind wizard's son said to the king: "Send for the old wizard from Finland; he knows more than all the wizards of your kingdom put together." A messenger was at once sent to Finland, and a week later the old wizard himself arrived on the wings of the wind. "Honored king," said the wizard, "the wind has

blown this illness upon your son and a magic ball has snatched away his beloved. This it is which makes him grieve so constantly. Let the wind blow upon him that it may blow away his sorrow." Then the king made his son go out into the wind, and he gradually recovered and told his father all. "Forget the maiden," said the king, "and take another bride"; but the prince said he could never love another.

A year afterward he came suddenly upon the bridge where his beloved had met her death. As he recalled the misfortune he wept bitterly, and would have given all he possessed to have her once more alive. In the midst of his grief he thought he heard a voice singing, and looked round, but could see no one. Then he heard the voice again, and it said:

"Alas! bewitched and all forsaken,
'Tis I must lie forever here!
My beloved no thought has taken
To free his bride, that was so dear."

He was greatly astonished, sprang from his horse, and looked everywhere to see if no one were hidden under the bridge; but no one was there. Then he noticed a yellow water-lily floating on the surface of the water, half-hidden by its broad leaves; but flowers do not sing, and in great surprise he waited, hoping to hear more. Then again the voice sang:

"Alas! bewitched and all forsaken,
'Tis I must lie forever here!
My beloved no thought has taken
To free his bride, that was so dear."

The prince suddenly remembered the gold-spinners, and said to himself: "If I ride thither, who knows but that they could explain this to me?" He at once rode to the hut and found the two maidens at the fountain. He told them what had befallen their sister the year before, and how he had twice heard a strange song, but yet could see no singer. They said that the yellow water-lily could be none other than their sister, who was not dead, but transformed by the magic ball. Be-

fore he went to bed the eldest made a cake of magic herbs, which she gave him to eat. In the night he dreamed that he was living in the forest and could understand all that the birds said to each other. Next morning he told this to the maidens, and they said that the charmed cake had caused it, and advised him to listen well to the birds and see what they could tell him, and when he had recovered his bride they begged him to return and deliver them from their wretched bondage.

Having promised this, he joyfully returned home, and as he was riding through the forest he could perfectly understand all that the birds said. He heard a thrush say to a magpie: "How stupid men are! they cannot understand the simplest thing. It is now quite a year since the maiden was transformed into a water-lily, and though she sings so sadly that any one going over the bridge must hear her, yet no one comes to her aid. Her former bridegroom rode over it a few days ago and heard her singing, but was no wiser than the rest."

"And he is to blame for all her misfortunes," added the magpie. "If he heeds only the words of men she will remain a flower forever. She were soon delivered were the matter only laid before the old wizard of Finland."

After hearing this, the prince wondered how he could get a message conveyed to Finland. He heard one swallow say to another: "Come, let us fly to Finland; we can build better nests there."

"Stop, kind friends!" cried the prince. "Will ye do something for me?" The birds consented, and he said: "Take a thousand greetings from me to the wizard of Finland, and ask him how I may restore a maiden who has been changed into a flower to her own form."

The swallows flew away, and the prince rode on to the bridge. There he waited, hoping to hear the song. But he heard nothing but the rushing of the water and the moaning of the wind, and, disappointed, rode home.

Shortly after he was sitting in the garden, thinking that

the swallows must have forgotten his message, when he saw an eagle flying above him. The bird gradually descended until it perched on a tree close to the prince and said: "The wizard of Finland greets thee and bids me say that thou mayst free the maiden thus: Go to the river and smear thyself all over with mud; then say, 'From a man into a crab,' and thou wilt become a crab. Plunge boldly into the water, swim as close as thou canst to the water-lily's roots, and loosen them from the mud and reeds. This done, fasten thy claws into the roots and rise with them to the surface. Let the water flow all over the flower, and drift with the current until thou comest to a mountain ash-tree on the left bank. There is near it a large stone. Stop there and say, 'From a crab into a man, from a water-lily into a maiden,' and ye will both be restored to your own forms."

Full of doubt and fear, the prince let some time pass before he was bold enough to attempt to rescue the maiden. Then a crow said to him: "Why dost thou hesitate? The old wizard has not told thee wrong, neither have the birds deceived thee; hasten and dry the maiden's tears."

"Nothing worse than death can befall me," thought the prince, "and death is better than endless sorrow." So he mounted his horse and went to the bridge. Again he heard the water-lily's lament, and hesitating no longer, smeared himself all over with mud, and saying, "From a man into a crab," plunged into the river. For one moment the water hissed in his ears and then all was silent. He swam up to the plant and began to loosen its roots, but so firmly were they fixed in the mud and reeds that this took him a long time. He then grasped them and rose to the surface, letting the water flow over the flower. The current carried them down the stream, but nowhere could he see the mountain ash. At last he saw it, and close by the large stone. Here he stopped and said, "From a crab into a man, from a water-lily into a maiden," and to his delight found himself once more a prince, and the maiden was by his side. She was ten times more beautiful than before, and wore a magnificent pale yellow

robe sparkling with jewels. She thanked him for having freed her from the cruel witch's power, and willingly consented to marry him.

But when they came to the bridge where he had left his horse it was nowhere to be seen, for though the prince thought he had been a crab only a few hours, he had in reality been under the water for more than ten days. While they were wondering how they should reach his father's court, they saw a splendid coach driven by six gaily caparisoned horses coming along the bank. In this they drove to the palace. The king and queen were at church, weeping for their son, whom they had long mourned for dead. Great was their delight and astonishment when the prince entered, leading the beautiful maiden by the hand. The wedding was at once celebrated, and there was feasting and merrymaking throughout the kingdom for six weeks.

Some time afterward the prince and his bride were sitting in the garden, when a crow said to them: "Ungrateful creatures! Have ye forgotten the two poor maidens who helped ye in your distress? Must they spin gold flax forever? Have no pity on the old witch. The three maidens are princesses, whom she stole away when they were children together, with all the silver utensils, which she turned into gold flax. Poison were her fittest punishment."

The prince was ashamed of having forgotten his promise and set out at once, and by great good fortune reached the hut when the old woman was away. The maidens had dreamed that he was coming and were ready to go with him, but first they made a cake in which they put poison, and left it on a table where the old woman was likely to see it when she returned. She did see it, and thought it looked so tempting that she greedily ate it up and at once died.

In the secret chamber were found fifty wagon-loads of gold flax, and as much more was discovered buried. The hut was razed to the ground, and the prince and his bride and her two sisters lived happily ever after.

## *The Story of the Hind in the Forest*

ONCE upon a time, there lived a king and queen, whose union was perfect; they loved each other tenderly, and were adored by their subjects: one thing only was wanting to complete the felicity of both subjects and sovereigns; and that was an heir to the throne. The queen, who was persuaded that her husband would love her still more fondly if she had a son, prayed continually to Heaven to bless her with one.

One day, having taken a walk in a forest, the queen seated herself near a fountain; and, having desired her ladies to leave her alone, began her ordinary lamentations: "Alas! how unfortunate I am, to have no children!" she said. "The poorest woman in my dominions is blessed with them; while I, though I have prayed day and night for the last five years for a son, am still denied this fondest wish of my heart."

As the queen thus spoke, she observed the water become troubled; and, almost immediately, an immense lobster appeared above its surface, and said: "Great queen, your desire is at last about to be satisfied: you must know that there is near this spot a superb palace, built by the fairies, which, however, it is impossible for you to find, because it is surrounded by very thick clouds, which are impenetrable to the eyes of mortals; still, as I am your very humble servant, if you will trust yourself to the keeping of a poor lobster, I will conduct you to it."

The queen listened to this address in silence—for the novelty of hearing a lobster speak very much surprised her—but said she would accept the offer with pleasure, although she did not know how to walk backward. The lobster smiled, and, immediately taking the shape of a handsome little old woman,—

"Now, your majesty," she said, "now we need not walk backward, eh? You will not refuse to accompany me now; and above all, regard me as your friend, for my sole desire is to be of service to you."

The little woman then stepped out of the fountain, attired in a beautiful white dress, lined with crimson, which, with her gray hair, decked out with green ribbons, was unspotted by the water; indeed, there never was a gayer looking old lady. She saluted the queen, and, having been embraced by her majesty, showed her, without further delay, a path in the forest, that not a little surprised her; for, though she had been there thousands and thousands of times before, she had never discovered it. In fact, how should she? It was the path by which the fairies always visited their fountain, and was generally choked up with thorns and brambles; but when the queen and her conductress appeared, rose-trees immediately burst into blossom, jasmine and orange-trees entwined their branches to form a bower, covered with leaves, and blooming with flowers, for their accommodation; violets sprang up wherever they placed their feet, and thousands of singing birds filled the air with a melodious concert.

The queen had not recovered from her surprise when her eyes were struck by the unparalleled luster of a palace built entirely of diamonds: the walls, roof, ceilings, floors, staircases, balconies, and even the terraces—all were composed of that precious material. In the excess of her astonishment, she could not forbear asking the gay old lady, who accompanied her, whether what she saw were a dream or reality. "Nothing can be more real, madam," replied the fairy. As she spoke, the doors of the palace opened, and six fairies came from it; but what fairies! they were the most beautiful and most magnificent that ever existed. They approached the queen, and, courtesying in the most graceful manner, presented her with a bouquet made of precious stones, containing a rose, a tulip, an anemone, a hyacinth, a pink, and an auricula. "Madam," said one of the fairies, addressing the queen, "we cannot show you a greater mark of our perfect respect than by permitting you

to visit us in our palace; and we are most happy to announce to you that you will soon have a beautiful princess, whom you must christen Welcome, which we are sure she will be to you. Fail not, as soon as she is born, to call us to you; for we intend to endow her with all kinds of good qualities: you have only to take the bouquet we have given you, and name each of the six flowers, and be assured you will soon see us in your chamber."

The queen, transported with joy, threw herself on their necks, and their embracings lasted a full half-hour. They then entreated the queen to enter their palace, to which no description can do justice. The fairies had procured an architect from the sun; and he had made their residence an exact miniature model of that luminary, so that the queen could hardly bear its dazzling luster, and was continually shutting her eyes. The fairies conducted their guest to the garden, which produced the finest fruits that were ever seen. There were apricots larger than one's head, and cherries so large that to eat them it was necessary to divide them into quarters, and of such exquisite flavor that the queen never afterward cared to eat any others.

To tell the queen's transport, of how much she spoke of the little Princess Welcome, and how many times she thanked the amiable persons who had announced such agreeable news, is what I will not attempt; but I must say that no expression of affection and gratitude was wanting on her part. The Fairy of the Fountain, who was not neglected in the queen's thanks, entreated her guest to remain until the evening in the palace; and, as her majesty was fond of music, her hosts, by their delightful singing, completed her enchantment; after which, loaded with presents, she retired, accompanied by the Fairy of the Fountain.

Meanwhile the king and all the household were dreadfully alarmed at the queen's absence, and a rigorous and anxious search was made, which, of course, ended unsuccessfully. As she was young and beautiful, it was feared that some audacious strangers had carried her off. Everybody about the court was

therefore overjoyed to see her return; and, as she was herself in excellent spirits, at the promises which had just been made to her, her conversation was so brilliant and agreeable that she charmed more than ever.

In due time the queen became the mother of a princess, whom she immediately christened Welcome; then, taking the bouquet that had been given to her, she repeated the names of the flowers one by one, and the six fairies immediately arrived. They came in chariots, each constructed in a different style and of different materials: one was of ebony, drawn by white pigeons; another, of ivory, drawn by small ravens; the rest, of cedar, zebra, and other valuable woods. These were their equipages of amity and peace; for, when angry, they rode on flying dragons, or winged serpents, which shot fire from their mouths and eyes; or on winged lions, leopards, or panthers, which transported them through the air, from one end of the world to the other in less time than it takes to say Good-by or How d'ye do; but on this occasion they were in the best humor possible.

They entered the queen's chamber with a pleased and majestic air, followed by male and female dwarfs all bearing presents. After they had embraced the queen and kissed the infant princess, they displayed the baby linen, the delicate material of which was spun by the fairies in their leisure hours, and, although fine as a web, was yet so good that it might have been used for a century; while the lace with which it was trimmed surpassed in quality, if possible, that of the web itself; and on it was worked the history of the whole world. The swaddling clothes and coverlets, which they had embroidered expressly for little Welcome, were worked, in the most lively colors, with thousands of different games at which children amuse themselves. Never, since embroidery was first practised, was seen such perfect work; but when the fairies produced the cradle, the queen exclaimed again with admiration, for it surpassed all they had as yet shown her. It was made of so beautiful and uncommon a kind of wood, inlaid with mother of pearl, that its worth could not be estimated. Four little Cupids

bore it on their shoulders, and they were indeed four masterpieces of art, made entirely of diamonds and rubies, and so beautifully that no language can do justice to them. These little Cupids had been so far animated by the fairies that when the baby cried they rocked and soothed it to sleep, which certainly was very convenient for the nurses.

The fairies themselves took the little princess on their knees, dressed it, and kissed it a hundred times: she was already so handsome that it was impossible to see her without loving her. Observing that she required food, they struck the floor with their wands, and there immediately appeared a nurse, fitted in every respect to take charge of the amiable baby. It now only remained for them to endow the child, which the fairies hastened to do. One gifted her with virtue, another with wit, the third with more than mortal beauty, the fourth with good fortune, the fifth promised her a long and healthy life, and the last, that she should do well whatever she attempted.

The overjoyed queen was eloquently expressing her thanks for the favors that the fairies so liberally showered on her infant princess when an immense lobster entered the chamber. "Ah! too ungrateful queen," said the fish; "so you have not deigned to remember me! Is it possible that you can so soon have forgotten the Fairy of the Fountain, and the kindness she did you in conducting you to her sisters? Why, having summoned them all, am I alone neglected? I had, however, a presentiment of this ingratitude, and this induced me to appear as a lobster when I spoke to you for the first time, by which I meant to imply that your friendship, instead of advancing, would recede."

The queen, inconsolable for the fault she had committed, interrupted the Fairy of the Fountain to beg her pardon; saying, in excuse for her forgetfulness, that the fairy had neglected to name her flower like the others; that she was incapable of ever forgetting the obligations she had received at her hands, and concluded by entreating her not to withdraw her friendship, and, above all, not to injure the litttle princess. All the fairies, who feared that their offended sister would endow Welcome

with ill-luck and misfortunes, seconded the queen's endeavors to soften her. "Dear sister," they said, "permit us to entreat your highness not to be angry with a queen who never intended to displease you; pray lay aside your figure of a lobster, that we may see you again resplendent with all your charms."

The Fairy of the Fountain piqued herself on her good looks; the praises that her sisters bestowed on her, therefore, partly dissipated her anger. "Well, sisters," said she, "I will not inflict upon the little Welcome all the evil that I had resolved; for it was my intention effectually to mar all your good gifts: you have, however, prevailed upon me to alter my mind; but I give you fair warning, that if she sees the light of day before she attain the age of fifteen years, she will have reason to repent it; nay, it may cost her her life." Neither the queen's tears nor the supplications of the other fairies could induce the incensed Fairy of the Fountain to alter this decree; and she retired backward, for she had not condescended to quit the figure of a lobster.

When the fairy had left the chamber, the sorrowful queen asked the six fairies to inform her how she might preserve her daughter from the evils that threatened her.

They held a council, and, after a lengthened and animated discussion, came to the unanimous opinion that the best plan would be to build a palace without doors or windows; with only one, and that a subterranean, entrance; and in this palace to bring up the princess until she should complete her fifteenth year.

Three strokes with their wands sufficed to begin and finish a most superb edifice. Externally the walls were of green marble, and internally of white; the floors and ceilings were of diamonds and emeralds, disposed in the forms of flowers and birds, and innumerable pretty devices. The walls were hung with tapestry of different colors, embroidered by the fairies' own hands; and, as they were well acquainted with history past, present, and to come, they depicted thereon its most remarkable personages and events, and among the rest the

heroic actions of the great King of France, Louis XIV, and the future glories of the reign of Victoria of England.

The Princess Welcome's residence was lighted by wax tapers only; but there was such an immense quantity of them that they made a perpetual day. Masters, requisite to perfect her education, were conducted by the fairies to her palace; but her natural wit and intelligence almost always anticipated their instructions; and they were continually charmed and astonished at the surprising things uttered by her, at an age when most children can hardly repeat their nurse's name: verily, people are not endowed by fairies to remain ignorant and stupid.

If her wit charmed all who were thrown into contact with her, her beauty was not less powerful in its effects, but delighted the most insensible. The kind fairies came from time to time to see her, and at every visit brought presents of the most costly and rare description—dresses so tastefully made, and of such precious materials, that they would have been suitable even for a certain young queen, who is no less amiable than the princess of whom I speak. The fairies never came without reminding the queen of the importance of not permitting her to see the light of day before the prescribed time. "Our sister of the fountain is vindictive," they would say; "and, however interested we may be for the welfare of your child, she will not fail to do her a mischief if she can; therefore, madam, you cannot be too vigilant on this point." The queen promised to pay the utmost attention to their kind recommendations; but as the time approached when her beloved daughter would be able to quit her palace of confinement, she had her portrait taken, and sent copies of it to all the great courts in the world. To have beheld the beautiful Welcome's portrait and not to have been charmed with it would have been impossible; but one young prince was so struck by its surpassing loveliness that he could not endure that it should be out of his sight. He shut himself up with it in his cabinet, and, speaking as though it were capable of understanding him, addressed the most impassioned declarations to the beautiful resemblance.

The king, no longer observing his son at his usual occupa-

tions, inquired what had estranged him, and what it was that caused him to look less happy and cheerful than usual. Some courtiers, speaking too hastily (there are many of that character) told his Majesty that they feared the prince had lost his senses, as he was in the habit of shutting himself up for whole days in his closet and talking to himself in the most extravagant terms.

The king, alarmed at hearing this intelligence, said to his confidant: "Is it possible that my son should have lost his reason—he who always displayed so much intelligence and wit? I have not observed any wildness in his looks, although he appears somewhat thoughtful and melancholy; but I must talk with him; perhaps I may discover what it is which affects him."

Accordingly, the king sent for his son, and asked him what had happened that his person and temper should have undergone so sudden a change. The prince, thinking it a favorable opportunity, threw himself at his father's feet. "You have determined," said he, "to marry me to the Black Princess, and you would certainly derive advantages from my alliance with her, which I cannot promise you would result from my union with the Princess Welcome; but, sir, I find charms in the latter that I shall never see in the former." "And how, pray, have you been able to make a comparison?" demanded the king. "The portraits of both princesses have been brought to me," replied Prince Valiant (so the young prince was called, in consequence of having greatly contributed to the achievement of three splendid victories); "and I have conceived so violent a passion for the Princess Welcome that if you do not recall your promise made to the Black Princess, I must die; happy, however, to quit this life when all hope of possessing her I love is lost to me forever."

"It is then with her portrait," replied the king gravely, "that you hold conversations which render you ridiculous in the eyes of my courtiers: they think you insane; and if you knew how much the idea annoys me, you would be ashamed to display a weakness which gives countenance to such a report."

"I cannot reproach myself with any weakness," answered Valiant; "when you shall have seen the portrait of the charming princess, you will, I am sure, approve of my preference." "Go and fetch it immediately," said the king, with an air of impatience, which showed he was not very well pleased. The prince would have been pained at this, but that he was certain that Welcome was the most beautiful princess in the world. He ran, therefore, to his closet, and returned with the portrait to the king, who was almost as much smitten by it as his son. "Aha!" said he, "my dear Valiant, I grant you your desire; I shall grow young again myself, when I have so lovely a princess at my court. I will immediately despatch ambassadors to the court of the Black Princess and recall my promise, though a war should be the consequence."

Valiant respectfully kissed his father's hands, and repeatedly embraced his knees. He was so overjoyed that he did not look like the same person, and begged the king to despatch ambassadors not only to the Black Princess, but to Welcome; and that he would choose for the latter the richest and most intelligent of his courtiers, as it would be necessary to make some appearance on this occasion, and to urge his suit with more than ordinary eloquence. The king immediately sent for Becafica, a very learned, amiable, and rich young lord, the intimate friend of Valiant. To please his friend, Becafica chose the grandest equipage and the handsomest livery imaginable; his diligence was extreme; for the prince's love increased every day, and he unceasingly conjured his friend to hasten his departure. "Believe me," said he confidentially, "when I say that my life depends on the success of your mission; that I am almost mad, when I think that the princess's father may have entered into engagements with some more favored suitor, which he may be unwilling to break in my favor, and that Welcome may thus be lost to me forever." Becafica reassured Valiant in order to gain time, for he was anxious to make as imposing an appearance as possible. His equipage consisted of eighty carriages resplendent with gold and diamonds; the most elaborately finished miniature could not be compared with the

paintings which ornamented them; there were likewise fifty other carriages, eighty thousand pages on horseback, more magnificent than princes; and the other parts of this sumptuous cortège were on an equally gorgeous scale.

When the ambassador had his last audience with the prince, previous to his departure, the latter embraced him affectionately. "Remember, my dear Becafica," he said, "that my life depends on the marriage you are about to negotiate; use, then, all your eloquence to attain it for me, and to bring back with you the amiable princess whom I adore." Valiant loaded his friend with a thousand presents for Welcome, in which gallantry surpassed costliness: they consisted of amorous devices engraved on diamond seals; watches in cases of carbuncle, bearing the initials of Welcome's name; ruby bracelets carved in the shape of hearts; in short, it would fill volumes to relate all that he had imagined to please her.

The ambassador carried with him Valiant's portrait, painted by so skilful a man that it spoke, and could make witty and complimentary little speeches. It did not indeed reply to all that was said to or asked of it; nor was it necessary that it should, as Becafica promised to neglect nothing that might further the object of his embassy, adding that he should take such immense sums of money with him that, if the princess should be refused him by her father, he did not doubt but that he should still find some means of gaining over her women to enable him to carry her away. "Ah!" cried the prince, "I cannot consent to that; the amiable Welcome would be offended by a proceeding so disrespectful." To this observation Becafica made no answer, and forthwith set out.

The report of his coming preceded the ambassador, and the king and queen were delighted with the news, as they esteemed and respected Valiant's father, and were not unacquainted with the prince's heroic actions and his rare personal merit, with which they were so satisfied that had they searched over the whole world for a husband for their daughter they could not have found one more worthy of her in their estimation. A palace was accordingly prepared for Becafica's reception, and all

the necessary orders given for the court to appear in the utmost magnificence.

The king and queen had decided that the ambassador should see Welcome, when the fairy Tulip sought out the queen and said to her: "Take care, madam, that Becafica be not introduced to our child (so she called the princess) at present, and do not be induced to consent to send her to the court of the king who is about to demand her in marriage for his son, before she shall have completed her fifteenth year; for, be assured, that if she leave the palace in which she now resides, some misfortune will befall her." The queen embraced the good fairy Tulip, and promised to follow her advice; they immediately went to visit the princess.

The ambassador arrived, his equipage taking twenty-three hours to proceed from the city gates to the palace; for he had six hundred thousand mules, shod with gold, and bearing small golden bells fastened to their necks, their trappings being of velvet and brocade embroidered with pearls. The streets through which they passed were completely blocked up by the dense crowd of spectators from all parts of the kingdom. The king and queen went out to meet Becafica, so pleased were they with his coming. It is useless to speak of the harangue that he made, or of the ceremonies that passed on both sides; they may easily be imagined; but when he begged permission to pay his respects to the princess, he was not a little surprised that this honor was refused him. "If, my lord Becafica," said the king to the ambassador, "we refuse you a request which appears so reasonable, be assured that it is not through caprice or want of respect, but from a strange fatality which attends our daughter, and of which we will inform you that you may act accordingly.

"A fairy, at the moment of her birth, threatened her with a very severe misfortune if she should by any chance see the light of day before she had attained the age of fifteen years; accordingly we have hitherto kept her in close confinement, in a palace, of which the finest apartments are underground. We had resolved that your excellency should visit her; but the

fairy Tulip, one of her guardians, has charged us on no account to allow you so to do." "Sire," replied the ambassador, in astonishment, "shall I then have the disappointment of returning without her? You will surely grant her in marriage to the prince, my master's son; she is looked for at his court with the utmost impatience; and is it possible that you can be influenced by the ridiculous predictions of fairies? There is Prince Valiant's portrait, which I have orders to present to your daughter: it is so excellent a likeness that I fancy I see him when I look upon it." Thereupon Becafica displayed the portrait, which immediately said: "Charming Welcome, you cannot imagine with what eagerness I attend your coming: hasten to our court, to grace it with those charms which render you incomparable." Then the portrait was silent, and the king and queen were so surprised that they entreated Becafica to allow them to present it to the princess. The ambassador, overjoyed at this request, readily transferred it into their hands.

Hitherto the queen had not mentioned to her daughter what was passing, and had, moreover, forbidden Welcome's attendants to say a word on the subject of the ambassador's arrival. This, of course, was enough to make them tell her all about it, and the princess soon knew the whole history of the intended marriage; but she was sufficiently prudent not to hint such knowledge to her mother. Still, when the queen showed Welcome the portrait of the young prince, which immediately spoke, and paid the princess a compliment as elegant as it was appropriate, she was much astonished; for she had never seen a talking portrait before, nor indeed one of so handsome a young man as Valiant, whose regular features and refined air charmed her as much as the homage paid to herself. "Should you be sorry," said the queen, laughing, "to have a husband resembling this portrait?" "Madam," replied Welcome, like a good girl, "it is not for me to make a choice; I shall be certainly satisfied with the husband on whom you shall think fit to bestow me." "But," added the queen, "tell me, if the original of this portrait were our choice, should you not esteem yourself as fortunate?" Welcome blushed, cast down her

eyes, and made no answer. The queen embraced her tenderly, and could not forbear shedding tears to think that she was on the point of parting with her, for it only wanted three months to complete her fifteenth year. Concealing her uneasiness, however, the queen informed her daughter of the object of Becafica's embassy, and gave her presents that he had brought from Valiant. Welcome could not but admire them, and praised with much taste the most curious among them; but her eyes wandered from time to time to gaze on the portrait of Prince Valiant, which she contemplated with a pleasure which had until then been unknown to her.

Meanwhile the ambassador, finding that all his entreaties failed to induce the king to allow Welcome to return with him to his court, and that he could only obtain the promise of her hand for Valiant (though that promise was given so solemnly that he could not doubt the king's intention to fulfil it), made but a short stay with the king, and hurried home to inform his royal masters of the result of his mission.

When the prince learned that he could not hope to see his beloved Welcome for more than three months to come, his lamentations afflicted all the court; he took neither food nor rest, and became sorrowful and thoughtful. His brilliant complexion gave way to wan cheeks and sunken eyes, and he remained whole days in his closet reclining on a sofa and gazing on the portrait of his princess. He wrote the most impassioned verses, which he presented to the insensible canvas, as if it had been capable of reading them. At last his strength completely left him, and he was gradually wasting away with an illness which neither physicians nor surgeons could remove.

The king's grief was excessive, for he was dotingly fond of his son, whom he feared he was now on the point of losing. What an affliction for a tender parent! In this great extremity he resolved to visit the king and queen, who had promised their daughter to Valiant, to entreat them to have pity on the prince, in the condition to which he was reduced, and to defer no longer a marriage which could never take place if they were resolved on waiting till the princess was fifteen years of age.

Unfortunately, there was one difficulty which was insurmountable; it was that his great age obliged him to travel in a litter —a mode of conveyance which accorded but ill with his son's impatience: the trusty Becafica was therefore despatched in advance, charged with the most touching epistles, in which Prince Valiant conjured the king and queen to yield to his wishes.

Meanwhile, Welcome received as much pleasure in the contemplation of the prince's portrait as Valiant had in regarding her own. She was continually in the chamber in which it hung, and, careful as she was to conceal her sentiments, her attendants were not slow in perceiving their direction; and among others Flora and Narcissa, two of her maids of honor, soon observed the uneasiness that had begun to trouble her. Flora passionately loved her mistress and was faithful to her; but Narcissa had always felt a secret envy of Welcome's beauty, birth, and accomplishments. Narcissa's mother, having educated the princess, had afterward become her mistress of the robes. As her instructress, she ought indeed to have loved Welcome as the most amiable child in the world; but, doting on her daughter, and perceiving the hatred the latter bore toward the beautiful princess, her feelings had become estranged from her pupil.

The ambassador who had been despatched to the court of the Black Princess did not, as you may suppose, experience a very flattering reception when he made known the object of his embassy. The Ethiopian princess, who was the most vindictive creature in the world, was extremely indignant that, after having entered into engagements with her, she should be treated with so little respect. Her royal highness had seen and become enamored of a portrait of Prince Valiant; and Ethiopians, when once they conceive a passion, are more extravagant in their ardor than any other nation under the sun. "What, Master Ambassador," said the princess, "does your master think I am not sufficiently rich or handsome? Make a tour of my kingdom and you will find that it is an extensive one; visit my royal treasury and you will behold more gold

than the mines of Peru can furnish; behold, too, the rich black of my complexion, this well-turned nose, these pouting lips, and deny, if you can, my claims to beauty." "Madam," replied the ambassador, who dreaded the bastinado—for they did not treat ambassadors ceremoniously among the Ethiopians—"I blame my master as much as a subject dare; and if Heaven had placed me on the first throne in the world, I know too well with whom I should have wished to share it." "These words have saved your life," said the Black Princess. "I had determined to begin my revenge on you; but it would be unjust to do so, as you are not the cause of your master's crime. Hasten whence you came and tell your master that I am very happy to break with him, and that he is king of an unworthy people." The ambassador, who wished for nothing better than his dismissal, profited by it to hasten from Ethiopia as fast as he could.

But the Black Princess was too deeply offended with Prince Valiant to forgive him so easily. Having seated herself in an ivory chariot, drawn by four ostriches, which traveled at the rate of ten leagues an hour, she hastened to the palace of the Fairy of the Fountain, who was her godmother and best friend. She related what had transpired, and entreated the fairy to assist her in her revenge. Sensible of the cause of her goddaughter's grief, the Fairy of the Fountain consulted her book, which told everything, and immediately perceived that Prince Valiant had only given up the Black Princess for the sake of Princess Welcome; that he was passionately in love with the latter, and that the sole cause of his present illness was his impatience to see her. When the Fairy of the Fountain was aware of this, her anger, which as we have said had been somewhat softened, now became as strong as ever. As she had not seen Welcome since her birth, it is probable that she would have done her no further mischief if the revengeful Black Princess had not now recalled her to her recollection. "What!" cried she, "and is this wretched Welcome always to thwart me? No, charming princess, no, my darling, I will not allow any one to affront you: all the elements are interested in this business: return to your

court, and rely on your dear godmother." The Black Princess thanked her and retired, after making her a present of flowers and fruits, with which she was very well pleased.

We left the ambassador Becafica advancing with all diligence toward the capital where Welcome's father held his court. Having arrived, he sought out the royal apartment, threw himself at the king and queen's feet, and, his eyes filled with tears, informed them, in the most moving terms, that Prince Valiant would surely die if they still refused to grant him the pleasure of seeing their daughter; that it only wanted three months to complete her fifteenth year, and that surely no harm could befall her in so short a space of time. He added that he trusted they would excuse the liberty he was about to take in telling them that such implicit belief in the promises or threats of insignificant fairies was unbecoming their royal dignity: in short, Becafica was so eloquent that he carried his point. The king and queen wept at hearing his account of the sorrowful condition to which the young prince was reduced, and told his excellency that they yielded, and would take only a day or two to consider in what manner his wishes could best be accomplished. But this did not satisfy Becafica; he told them again to what extremity his master was reduced, and that, if they wished to save his life, an hour or two must suffice for their preparations. Their majesties accordingly assured the ambassador that he should know their determination that evening.

The queen hastened to her beloved daughter's palace to inform her of all that had passed. Welcome's grief was excessive on hearing of Valiant's illness: her heart beat violently, and she fainted away, thus exposing to the queen the extent of her passion for the prince. "Do not afflict yourself, my dear child," said her majesty; "his cure depends on you alone; I am only alarmed at the Fairy of the Fountain's threats." "I trust, my dear madam," answered Welcome, "that, by taking every precaution, we may avoid the malice of the vindictive fairy. Can I not, for instance, travel in a carriage so closely shut up as not to admit daylight? They might open it at night

to give me food, and I should thus arrive in time to save Prince Valiant's life, and yet incur no danger."

The queen liked the idea which love had suggested to the princess, and communicated it to his majesty, by whom it was also approved. Becafica was therefore informed that Welcome would set out immediately, and that he might hasten back to his master with the intelligence; but, as no time was to be lost, they would not be able to prepare such magnificent clothes for the princess as they could wish, or an equipage suitable to her rank. The ambassador, transported with joy, once more threw himself at their majesties' feet, to express his gratitude, and set out to return without having seen the princess.

Separation from the king and queen would have been insupportable to Welcome had she been less prepossessed in favor of the prince; but there are some emotions which stifle almost all others. For her accommodation, a carriage was built of costly wood, covered with green velvet and plates of gold, and lined with rose-colored brocade embroidered with silver. It was large and commodious, but had no windows, and the door was contrived to shut so closely that there was not a crevice left by which the smallest ray of light might enter, while a peer of the realm had charge of the keys. The king and queen then presented Welcome with some fine clothes and jewelry; and, after bidding adieu to her parents and the courtiers, who were overwhelmed with grief at parting with her, she was locked up in the dark carriage with her maids of honor, Narcissa and Flora.

Perhaps our readers have not forgotten that Narcissa did not like the Princess Welcome; they must now be informed that she was passionately in love with Valiant, whose speaking portrait she had seen. So deeply was she affected that, before setting out with Welcome, she told her mother she could never survive the princess's union with the prince; and that if she wished to preserve her daughter, she must manage to break off the intended marriage. The mistress of the robes told her daughter not to afflict herself, as she had no doubt of finding some means to render her happy.

On parting with her dear child, the queen recommended her most strenuously to the care of the wicked mother of Narcissa. "What a treasure have I placed under your charge!" she said. "My child is dearer to me than my life. Watch, then, tenderly over her, and take especial care that she see not the light of day, for, if she do, you know with what misfortunes she is menaced: I have made arrangements with Prince Valiant's ambassador that, until the remaining weeks of her fifteenth year shall have expired, she may reside in a castle lighted only by wax tapers." The queen then made the mistress of the robes several handsome presents, in order to induce her to observe her instructions more exactly, at the same time exacting a promise from her that she would be faithful, and send a good account of the princess immediately on her arrival.

The king and queen, trusting to her attendant's vigilance, felt no uneasiness on their dear daughter's account; and their confidence in her safety served in some sort to moderate the grief occasioned by her departure. But Narcissa, who learned from the servants who opened the carriage door every night at supper-time that they were drawing near the court of Valiant's father, where they were hourly expected, now pressed her mother on the subject, lest the king or the prince should come to meet the princess and thus frustrate their designs. Accordingly, about noon the next day, the wicked mistress of the robes produced a large knife, which she had brought with her on purpose, and suddenly cut a large hole in the roof of the carriage. The sun was shining brilliantly at the moment, and for the first time Welcome saw its light. In a moment the unfortunate princess uttered a deep sigh, and was metamorphosed into a white hind. She bounded through the aperture in the roof of the carriage, and was soon lost in a neighboring forest, where she sought a shady thicket, in which, unobserved, she might regret the charming form of which she had been so cruelly deprived.

The Fairy of the Fountain, who had contrived this cruelty, observing that the princess's attendants hastened, some in pursuit of their metamorphosed mistress and others to the town,

to give Prince Valiant notice of what had occurred, seemed, in the transport of her anger, to attempt the destruction of all nature. Flashes of forked lightning darted through the sky, followed by deafening peals of thunder, that terrified the stoutest hearts, in the midst of which the incensed fairy transported the princess's cortège to an immense distance from the scene of their mistress's misfortune, and each attendant in a different direction.

There remained only with the carriage Narcissa, her mother, and Flora. The last ran into the forest, in the direction she had seen her mistress take, making the rocks and leafy avenues reëcho with her lamentations, while Narcissa and her mother, overjoyed to have regained their liberty, lost not a moment in putting their designs into execution. Narcissa dressed herself in Welcome's most magnificent clothes. The royal robes, although not made expressly for the princess's wedding, were still rich and costly beyond description, and the crown was set with diamonds twice or thrice as large as one's hand; the scepter was made of a single ruby; and the ball, held on state occasions in the left hand, was made of one pearl as large as a cricket ball, and was consequently of enormous value, and in accordance with the princess's great beauty and worth. Thus dressed in Welcome's robes, and followed by her mother, bearing her train, Narcissa proceeded toward the capital. The counterfeit princess walked very slowly, confident that she should be met ere she reached the city; nor was she disappointed; for she had not advanced many steps when she observed a numerous body of horsemen, surrounding two litters glittering with gold and precious stones, and borne by mules, wearing plumes of green feathers. The king and the sick prince, who were in the litters, could not tell what to make of the ladies whom they perceived coming toward them. Some of the courtiers in advance of the troop, who galloped up to them, judged, from the magnificence of their dress, that they must be persons of rank. They accordingly alighted, and accosted them respectfully. "Will you have the goodness to inform me," said Narcissa to them, "who are in those litters?"

"Madam," answered the cavaliers, "the king of these realms, and the prince his son, who are coming to meet the Princess Welcome." "In that case," said Narcissa, "I entreat you to inform them she is here. A malicious fairy, envious of my happiness, has dispersed my equipage in a terrible storm of thunder and lightning; consequently, my only attendant is my mistress of the robes, who is fortunately in possession of the king, my father's letters and my jewelry."

On hearing this, the courtiers kissed the hem of Narcissa's robe, and hastened back to inform the king that the princess was at hand. "What!" cried his majesty, "the princess on foot, and at midday!" Then the horsemen related to the king all they had just heard from Narcissa. Prince Valiant, burning with impatience, called them to his side, and immediately addressing them, "Confess," said he, "that she is a miracle of beauty, an angel, an all-accomplished princess." Their silence not a little surprised the prince. "Seeing that she is beyond all praise, I suppose you prefer saying nothing," he continued. "My lord," said the most courageous of them, "you will soon be able to judge for yourself; perhaps the fatigue of traveling has altered her appearance." The prince was all astonishment, and, had he been less weak than he was, would have sprung from the litter to satisfy his impatience and curiosity. But the king alighted, and advancing, surrounded by his courtiers, soon joined the counterfeit princess: no sooner, however, did he obtain a glimpse of her features than he uttered a loud cry and exclaimed, falling back a few steps, "What do I see? What treachery is this?" "Sire," said the mistress of the robes, stepping boldly forward, "behold the Princess Welcome; here are her parents' letters, which I deliver into your hands, together with the casket of jewels which they intrusted to my keeping previous to our departure."

In the mean time the prince, leaning on Becafica, drew near Narcissa. Mercy on us! what was his astonishment when he beheld her revolting and extraordinary figure! She was so tall that the princess's clothes hardly covered her knees; she was as thin as a lath, and her nose, more crooked than a par-

rot's bill, was as red as a mulberry; her teeth were the blackest and most irregular ever seen; in short, she was as ugly as Welcome was beautiful.

The prince, whose mind was solely occupied by the idea of his charming princess, was for some time dumb with astonishment at the sight of her wretched representative. At last, turning to the king, "I am betrayed," said he; "the wondrous portrait which has captivated my heart is no likeness of this person; we are the victims of a stratagem which will cost me my life." "I do not understand you, my lord," said Narcissa. "You will not be deceived in marrying me." Her arrogance and impudence were unparalleled, while her wicked mother seconded her daughter most worthily. "Ha! my fair princess," cried she, "where are we? Is this the way to receive a person of your rank? What can be the meaning of such gross misconduct? But the king your father will know how to obtain satisfaction!" "That is for us to demand," replied the king; "he promised us a lovely princess, and he sends us a frightful mummy; I am no longer astonished that he should have been so careful to conceal this rare beauty for fifteen years; he had a mind to entrap some one into marriage with her, and my son has been unfortunate enough to be his first dupe. However, vengeance is in our power."

"What an affront!" cried the counterfeit princess; "unfortunate girl that I am, to have accepted the proposals of such people! All this fuss because my portrait is painted a little more beautiful than I really am! Why, that happens every day. If princes, for such trifles, always sent back their brides, there would be but few royal marriages."

The king and the prince were too indignant to make any remark to this insolence, but reëntered their litters without further ceremony; while the false princess and her mistress of the robes, mounted on horseback behind two of the bodyguard, were carried to the capital, and, by the king's orders, confined in the Black Tower.

Prince Valiant was so overwhelmed by the disappointment he had just experienced that no words could express his afflic-

tion. How bitterly did he bewail his hard fate! His love was still passionate as ever, although its object was now only a portrait. All his hopes were blighted; all the charming ideas that had filled his mind with regard to Welcome had suddenly vanished, for he would have preferred death itself to a union with her whom he believed to be that princess; in a word, never was grief equal to his. No longer able to endure his father's court, he resolved, so soon as his health should permit him to retire, to find some solitary place where he might pass the remainder of his sorrowful days.

He communicated his design to his faithful Becafica, who, he was convinced, would share his flight, and with whom he found a melancholy satisfaction in discoursing of the injury he had received. In a short time he set out, leaving on his closet table a long letter for the king his father, in which he assured his majesty that when his heart should have recovered from the shock it had received, he would return to court; entreating him, meanwhile, not to lose sight of their common vengeance, and to keep the ugly princess a close prisoner.

It is easy to imagine the king's grief when one morning this letter was put into his hands: the separation from his beloved son nearly cost him his life; but while the courtiers were occupied in soothing his majesty's affliction, Valiant and Becafica were hastening on their journey. At the end of three days they came to a vast forest, where the trees afforded so delightful a shade, and the turf was so green and flowery, that the prince, fatigued with traveling, being still far from well, alighted from his horse and threw himself sorrowfully on the bank of a rivulet. "While your lordship reposes," said Becafica, "I will seek for some fruit, and reconnoiter what part of the world we have lighted on." The prince made no answer, but silently acceded to Becafica's proposal.

We have not spoken for a long time of the hind in the wood, or, rather, the incomparable Princess Welcome. Having left the carriage as described, she stopped at a clear fountain in the forest, and was lamenting her sorrowful destiny when she observed her shadow in the water. "What do I see?" said she.

"Alas! alas! I am surely brought to a more miserable condition than ever the malice of a fairy reduced an innocent princess like myself! How long must I endure this dreadful change? Whither must I fly for protection from the lions, bears, and wolves? And can I then live on grass?" Thus she continued to exclaim, her grief continually augmenting, until it became almost unbearable. The only consolation she had, if indeed that were a consolation, was to know that her beauty as a hind was equal to her loveliness as a princess.

At last, feeling hungry, she began to nibble the grass, and found it so much to her taste that she ate with good appetite, not a little surprised at the novelty of her food. She then lay down on the turf; but her terror, when night came on, effectually prevented her from sleeping. She heard the wild beasts of the forest howling around her for their prey, and frequently, forgetting that she was a hind, endeavored to climb a tree. Becoming a little calmer toward daybreak, she saw, for the first time in her life, the sun rise in all his glory, and was so struck with admiration at its brilliancy that she could not withdraw her eyes from it, and for a time forgot her metamorphosis. All she had heard of its splendor fell far short of the reality of what she now witnessed; and gazing on the sun became a consolation she had not hoped for in that desert place, where she remained for several days.

The fairy Tulip was sensibly afflicted at Welcome's misfortune, although extremely vexed that the queen should have taken so little notice of her admonitions; for she had told her repeatedly that, if the princess left her palace before she had completed her fifteenth year, some accident would certainly befall her. The amiable Tulip would not therefore abandon her favorite to the mercy of the Fairy of the Fountain, and directed Flora toward the forest, that she might console her mistress in her sufferings.

Flora had seated herself under a shady tree, on the bank of a rivulet, and was sorrowfully considering what direction she should take in search of her dear mistress when the white hind, perceiving her from the opposite bank, on which she had been

leisurely walking, with one bound cleared the stream, and, running up to Flora, covered her with caresses. The maid of honor was astonished at being so unexpectedly accosted; but, on looking more attentively in the hind's face was still more surprised to observe large tears coursing each other down its cheeks. She no longer doubted that it was her beloved princess. She took its feet in her hands, and kissed them with as much respect and tenderness as she would have kissed the princess's hands. She spoke affectionately to the hind, and perceived with joy that it understood her, although it could not answer her; and tears and sighs now redoubled on both sides. Flora promised her mistress never to forsake her, and the hind made signs, as well as she could, that she should be very glad of her maid's company.

The metamorphosed princess and her maid of honor remained thus together nearly all day, when Welcome, recollecting that her faithful Flora must be hungry, conducted her to a part of the wood in which she had observed some wild fruit-trees. Flora quickly gathered the fruit, which was not bad; but, having satisfied her hunger, she became very uneasy as to where they should pass the night; for the idea of remaining in the open forest, exposed to the night air and to wild beasts, seemed out of the question. "Are you not terrified, charming hind?" said she, "at remaining all night in the wood?" The hind turned her eyes toward Heaven, and sighed deeply. "But, as you have traversed a part of this vast forest," continued the maid of honor, "are there no huts, no charcoal-burners, no wood-cutters, not even a hermitage to be found?" The hind shook her head, intimating that she had seen nothing of the kind. "Alas!" cried Flora, "I shall never live through the night; for, if by good fortune I am not attacked by tigers or bears, fear alone will kill me. But think not, dearest princess, that I regret this on my own account; it is for your sake alone I fear to die: to leave you in this desert place, bereft of all consolation—can anything be more dreadful?" The little hind wept sufficiently to show that she had still a sensible heart.

Her tears moved the fairy Tulip, who, as we have said, still loved Welcome tenderly; so, suddenly rendering herself visible, "I am not come to scold you," said she; "the condition to which you are reduced gives me too much pain." The hind and Flora interrupted the fairy by throwing themselves at her feet: the former kissed Tulip's hands and caressed her fondly, while Flora entreated her to take pity on the princess and restore her to her natural shape. "That is not altogether in my power," answered the fairy; "but I can shorten the time of her punishment, and will enable her, until it has expired, to quit her present form at the close of the day; but, as soon as the morning appears, she must again become a hind, and wander through the woods and plains like other deer."

This was a great relief to the unhappy princess, who testified her joy by skips and bounds, which pleased the kind Tulip. "Follow this footpath," said the fairy; "it will take you to a little cabin, fairly well furnished for such an out-of-the-way place." She then disappeared, and Flora, accompanied by the hind, immediately taking the direction pointed out by the fairy, presently came to a small cottage, at the door of which was seated an old woman, who was making a wicker basket. "Good mother," said Flora, "will you have the kindness to accommodate myself and my hind for the night in your cottage? We require but a little room between us." "Yes, daughter," answered the good dame, "I will give you a lodging with pleasure; come in, and bring your hind with you." With that she showed them into a very pretty little room, wainscoted with cherry wood, in which stood two small beds with dimity furniture, fine sheets, and all so nice and clean that the princess afterward declared she had never seen an apartment more to her taste.

At nightfall Welcome, as she had been promised by the fairy, resumed her natural shape. She tenderly embraced her dear Flora, thanked her for the affection that had induced her to follow and share her fortunes, and promised to reward her when her penance should be completed.

After a while the old woman knocked softly at their door,

and, without entering the room, gave Flora a basket of fine ripe fruit, of which the princess made a hearty supper, and they then retired to bed. In the morning Welcome again became a hind, and began scratching at the door for Flora to let her out. After an affectionate parting, although it was only for a short time, the hind entered the thickest part of the neighboring forest.

I have said that Prince Valiant stopped in the forest, and that Becafica left him in search of fruit. About nightfall he arrived at the cottage of the good old woman who had sheltered Welcome and Flora, and very civilly begged the old lady to give him something for his master's refreshment. Accordingly, she filled a basket with fruit, and having given it to Becafica, said: "I fear that, if you pass the night in the open forest, some misfortune will befall you. You are welcome to a room in my cottage, which, although poor, will at least protect you from wild beasts." Becafica thanked her, and said that he and his companion would accept her hospitality. He then returned to Prince Valiant, whom he succeeded in persuading to accompany him to the cottage. They found the old woman at her door, and she quietly led them to a room exactly like that occupied by Flora and the hind, and separated from it by a thin partition only.

Prince Valiant passed a restless night, as usual. As soon as the sun's first rays shone on the windows of his room he arose, and, to divert his sorrow, walked into the forest, telling Becafica not to accompany him. He walked about a long while, heedlessly, and presently came to a shady thicket, from which there immediately rushed a white hind. Valiant could not forbear pursuing it, for the chase was his favorite exercise; and, although he had not hunted lately, he still carried his bow. His enthusiasm returning, he started off warmly in pursuit, and from time to time shot arrows at the poor hind, which almost frightened her to death. Protected by the fairy Tulip, however, she escaped them all, though Valiant was so excellent a marksman that nothing less than the powerful arm of a fairy could have preserved her life. Never was any one so tired as

our royal hind: at last, almost exhausted, she suddenly and dexterously turned into a pathway, and so baffled her pursuer.

The hind was very glad when twilight came, and turned her steps toward the cottage, where Flora impatiently awaited her. When she reached her apartment, she threw herself, out of breath, and covered with perspiration, on the bed, while her attendant caressed her tenderly, almost dying with anxiety to know what had happened to her in the forest. Night having set in, the beautiful princess resumed her natural shape; when, throwing her arms round her favorite's neck, "Alas!" said she, "I thought I had only to fear the Fairy of the Fountain, and the cruel tenants of the forest; but I have been pursued to-day by a young huntsman, whom I hardly saw, in my precipitation to escape from his arrows, which he shot at me repeatedly; and I know not by what miracle I have been preserved from death." "You must not go into the forest again, my princess," replied Flora: "pass in this chamber the fatal period of your penance; I will go to the nearest town to purchase books for your amusement. We will read charming tales together, or we will compose songs and sonnets." "Nay, books would be unnecessary, my dear Flora," answered the princess; "the alluring idea of Prince Valiant is sufficient to employ my thoughts agreeably. But, unfortunately, the same power that reduced me to the condition of a hind compels me, in spite of myself, to scour the plains, to leap across brooks and fences, and to eat grass like other hinds; consequently, the confinement of a chamber would be insupportable." Then, having acquired a good appetite by her violent exercise, she asked for her supper, and after she had eaten it went to sleep, and slept soundly until the next morning at daybreak, when she again sought the forest.

Meanwhile the prince, returning in the evening to rejoin Becafica, said to him: "I have spent my time in chasing the loveliest hind I ever saw; she gave me the slip a hundred times with wonderful adroitness, for I took such care to hit her, that I am at a loss to conceive how she escaped my arrows; but I intend to resume my pursuit of her to-morrow." Becafica was

not sorry to perceive that the prince's passion for the chase had revived. He encouraged him, therefore, in his determination to return next morning to the place where he had first seen the hind; who, however, took care to avoid the spot, fearful of another adventure of the same kind. Valiant looked cautiously around him, but walked through and through the thicket to no purpose. Tired and heated by his fruitless search, he was not a little pleased, when he came to a tree laden with apples, which looked so ripe and tempting that he gathered and ate some of them, when he almost immediately felt so sleepy that, coming to a spot where myriads of singing-birds seemed to have made their rendezvous, he threw himself on the grass under the trees and fell fast asleep.

Scarcely had Valiant closed his eyes when our timid hind entered the grove where he was reposing. She came close to where he lay before she saw him, and, his breathing informing her that he was asleep, paused to contemplate his features. How greatly astonished was she when she recognized in the sleeper the original of her lover's portrait! Her mind was too full of his charming image to have forgotten Valiant in so short a time. Alas! Fate, why be so unkind? Must then the lovely hind be exposed to lose her life by the hand of a suitor? Yes, she exposes her life; her safety is already endangered. She laid herself down at a short distance from the prince, and her eyes, delighted with the sight of her lover, were fixed on him intently: she sighed, and, at last, becoming more assured, drew close to and touched him, at which he awoke.

The prince's surprise, as may be easily imagined, was extreme at recognizing the hind that had given him so much trouble the preceding day, and that he had been seeking so diligently before he fell asleep; but that it should be now so familiar appeared to him extraordinary. She did not stay to be taken, but set off as fast as she could, followed by the prince. Sometimes they paused to take breath, for they were both much fatigued by the previous day's exertion, when the prince observed the hind turn her head toward him, as much as to ask if he were indeed bent on hunting her to death; but the instant

he endeavored to close with her, she made fresh efforts to elude him. "Ah! could you but understand me, pretty hind," cried he, "you would not thus fly from me; I love you, and would not kill you for the world." The hind, however, heard him not, and continued to fly rapidly onward.

At last, having made a complete circuit of the forest, and being completely exhausted, she slackened her steps, when the prince, redoubling his efforts, came up to her, with a joy that he thought he should never feel again. She was stretched on the ground, and to all appearance dying, when to her surprise he began to pat and caress her. "Pretty hind," said he, "be not afraid; I will take you home with me, will nurse you tenderly, and take care of you." Thereupon Valiant cut branches from the trees, matted them neatly together, covered them with moss, and strowed them with roses, which he gathered from a neighboring bush. He then took the hind gently in his arms, and placing her on the litter, seated himself by her side, gathering from time to time tufts of tender grass, which he offered her, and which she ate from his hand, talking to her continually, although he never imagined she could understand him.

Pleased as she was at his kindness and attention, she became uneasy as night approached. "What would happen," said she to herself, "if he were to see me suddenly change my shape? He would fly from me with horror; or, if he did not, what should I not have to fear, thus alone in the forest?" While she was revolving in her mind how to effect her escape, the prince himself offered her an opportunity; for, thinking the hind must be thirsty, he left her, to seek for water at the nearest brook, and, while thus occupied, she took to flight and returned to the cottage. She threw herself on her bed; and, when night came on, and she regained her proper form, she recounted her adventure to her companion.

"Would you believe, my dear Flora," she began, "that Prince Valiant is in this forest? He it was who pursued me yesterday, and who, having caught me to-day, has loaded me with caresses Ah! what a poor likeness of him is the portrait

I received! He is a hundred times more handsome. Am I not unfortunate to be obliged to fly from the prince for whom my parents have destined me, whom I love so dearly, and by whom I am loved in return?" These thoughts made her weep; while Flora endeavored to console her by repeating to her Tulip's promises, that after a time her sorrow would be changed into joy.

In the meanwhile Prince Valiant, having returned to the place where he had left the hind, was surprised to find she was no longer there. He looked in every direction, but in vain; and felt as much sorrow at her loss as if she had been his dearest friend. "What!" cried he, "am I then destined always to be unfortunate in the objects of my attachment?" He returned to the cottage overwhelmed with melancholy, and related to Becafica the story of the white hind, whom he accused of ingratitude. Becafica could not forbear smiling at the prince's anger, and advised him to punish the hind, when he should next meet with her, for her infidelity.

The next morning, at daybreak, the princess was undecided whether to seek the prince or to avoid him. At last she resolved to go to an immense distance from the part of the forest where she had met with him on the two previous days; but our prince, quite as cunning as the hind, did the same, thinking he should by that means, as in fact he did, discover her. She believed herself safe from pursuit, when suddenly she perceived the prince. With one bound she cleared the bushes, and, as though she dreaded her pursuer still more on account of the trick she had played him the previous afternoon, flew along more swiftly than the wind; but, while she was crossing a footpath, Valiant took so good an aim that he succeeded in burying an arrow in her leg. The hind, thus wounded, and unable to fly farther, sank upon the ground.

The prince hastened to the spot. All his anger vanished, and he felt a deep sorrow on seeing the blood flow from the wound he had inflicted: he gathered some herbs, and, after binding them on the wounded leg to soothe her pain, made her a new bed of branches and moss, resting the pretty hind's head upon

his knees. "Are you not the cause, little runaway," said Valiant, "of what has happened? What did I yesterday that you ran away from me? But you shall not do so to-day, for I will carry you home." The hind made no answer, while the prince caressed her most tenderly. "How deeply I regret wounding you!" continued he; "you will hate me, and I wish you to love me." To have heard him, one would have thought that some fairy inspired all he said. At last the prince resolved to remove the wounded hind, but was not a little embarrassed with carrying, leading, and sometimes drawing her after him on the litter. Welcome was in an agony the while. "What will become of me?" she said to herself; "I shall be alone with the prince! No, I would rather die!" Then she bore as heavily as she could on Valiant, and almost made him sink under her weight; so that, although not far from the old dame's cottage, he felt that without some assistance he could not carry her thither. He therefore resolved to fetch his faithful Becafica; but, before leaving his prize, he tied her with ribbons to a tree, that she might not escape.

Alas! who would have thought that the most lovely princess in the world could be thus treated by a prince who adored her? In vain the white hind tried to break the ribbons; her efforts only tightened the knots, and she had almost strangled herself, when Flora, who had been walking in the forest, came by chance to the spot where she was struggling. What was her astonishment to perceive her dear mistress in such a condition! She ran to her assistance, and, after disentangling and untying the ribbons, had nearly released her, when Prince Valiant, accompanied by Becafica, arrived.

"Whatever respect I may have for your sex, madam," said the prince, "I cannot permit you to release this hind; I struck her in the forest; she therefore belongs to me; and I entreat you to allow me to remain her master." "Sir," answered Flora, courteously (for she was handsome and well-spoken), "this hind was mine before she was yours, and I would rather lose my life than part with her. If you would convince yourself of the truth of what I say, I only ask you to set her at

liberty. Come, Blanche, Blanche," continued Flora, "come and embrace me." Welcome threw her forelegs round her maid of honor's neck. "Kiss my right cheek": she did so. "Touch my heart": she placed her fore foot on Flora's bosom. "Sigh": and the hind sighed. The prince could not, after this, doubt what Flora had told him. "I restore your hind," said Valiant, obligingly, "but I confess that it is not without reluctance." Flora thanked him, and hastened from the spot, accompanied by the hind.

They had no idea that the prince resided in the same cottage with themselves: he also, after following them for some time, was greatly surprised to see them enter the old woman's habitation.

Prompted by curiosity, he demanded of the old dame who the young person was whom he had seen enter the cottage with the hind. She answered that she did not know, but that she had received her with her hind a few days before; that she paid her well, and lived quite retired. Becafica asked in what part of the cottage her room was situated. The old woman answered that it was separated from their own by a thin partition.

When the prince had retired to his apartment, Becafica said that he was greatly mistaken if the young lady they had seen had not lived with the Princess Welcome; and that he had seen her at the palace on the occasion of his embassy. "What a sorrowful remembrance have you brought to my mind!" said Valiant; "but by what chance can one of the princess's attendants be here?" "Of that I am ignorant," replied Becafica; "but, my lord, as our room is separated from hers by only a thin wainscoting, I will make a hole through it, and perhaps we may discover the cause of her retirement." "Useless curiosity," said the prince, for Becafica's words had renewed all his sorrows: so, turning to his window, which looked out into the forest, he opened it, and was soon absorbed in thought.

Meanwhile Becafica set to work, and soon made a hole large enough to look through. To his astonishment, he saw a charming princess, dressed in a gown of silver brocade. em-

broidered with pink flowers, and bordered with gold and emeralds: her hair fell in large ringlets around the finest neck ever seen, and in her complexion the lily was blended with the rose to the most enchanting perfection, while no words can do justice to her sparkling black eyes. Flora was on her knees, binding up her fair mistress's arm, from which blood was flowing in streams. "Let me die," said the princess; "death were preferable to the unhappy life I lead. To continue a hind all day, and to see him I love, without being able to speak to him, to inform him of my fatal metamorphosis! Alas! had you heard all the tender things he said to me to-day with his gentle voice —had you witnessed his graceful and noble manners—you would lament still more than you do my misfortune."

Becafica's amazement at what he saw and heard may be easily imagined. He ran to the prince, and pulled him from the window in a transport of inexpressible joy. "Ah! my lord," said he, "behold the original of the portrait which has stolen your heart." Prince Valiant, surprised at his companion's excitement, put his eye to the hole, and immediately recognized his princess. What words can tell the pleasure he experienced! although he feared he was the sport of enchantment: in truth, how could he reconcile so surprising a rencounter with his recollections of Narcissa and her mother, whom he had left confined in the black tower, and who called themselves, the one Welcome, and the other her mistress of the robes?

However, his passion flattered him: the human mind has a natural tendency to persuade itself of whatever it wishes to be true. So, dying with impatience to clear up his doubts, Prince Valiant went immediately and knocked gently at the door of the princess's chamber. Flora, supposing that it was the old woman, whose assistance she wanted to bind up her mistress's arm, hastened to open it; and was not a little surprised to see the prince, who entered the room, and threw himself at Welcome's feet. His excess of joy so effectually prevented his speaking coherently that, although we have cross-examined Becafica and Flora themselves as to what he said on the occasion. neither of them could inform us. The princess was

equally embarrassed in her reply; but love, who can interpret for the dumb, came to their aid, and persuaded them both that nothing more eloquent had ever been spoken. Tears, sighs, vows, and even some gracious smiles, were nearly all that passed between our young lovers. The night having passed, the day appeared unexpectedly to Welcome; but, to her agreeable surprise, she was not changed into a hind. Her joy was boundless, and she then began the recital of her life to her lover, telling him the history of her metamorphosis with extreme natural grace and eloquence.

"What!" cried Prince Valiant. "What! lovely princess, have I wounded you in the form of a hind? How can I expiate so heavy a crime? Will it be enough to die of grief before your face?" He was so sensibly afflicted that his countenance gave visible tokens of his deep sorrow. Welcome suffered more at witnessing her lover's grief than from the wound, and assured him that it was merely a scratch; and that she could not help looking upon it with delight, since it had procured her so much happiness.

Her manner was so affectionate that he could not doubt her sincerity. He then related to her the fraud practised by Narcissa and her mother, adding that Becafica must hasten to the king to inform him of his son's good fortune, as he was about to wage a terrible war against her father's kingdom, in revenge for the affront he believed himself to have received. Becafica was on the point of setting out when a loud concert of trumpets, clarions, cymbals, and drums was heard in the forest; they fancied that they heard also the tramp of many feet at no great distance from the cottage. Valiant looked out at the window, and immediately recognized several of his father's officers, with the colors and standards of their regiments, and commanded them to halt.

Never were soldiers more delighted than were these on recognizing Valiant; the universal opinion being that the prince was about to put himself at their head and to lead them against Welcome's father. The king himself, notwithstanding his great age, commanded the army. He was in a litter of velvet,

embroidered with gold, followed by an open chariot, in which Narcissa and her mother were seated. When Valiant recognized his father's litter, he ran up to it; and the king received him with open arms, and embraced him with every testimony of paternal love. "Whence come you, my child?" cried he; "how little do you know the affliction your absence has caused me!" "Sire," said Valiant, "deign to listen to me." The king immediately alighted from his litter, and, retiring to a grove hard by, his son informed him of his fortunate meeting with Welcome, and of the treachery of Narcissa and her mother.

The king, filled with gratitude at this good news, raised his hands and eyes to Heaven to return thanks; and, at that moment, the Princess Welcome appeared before him, more lovely and more brilliant than all the stars. She was mounted on a superb curveting palfrey; a hundred feathers of different hues ornamented her head, and her jewels consisted of the largest diamonds ever dug from the earth. She wore a hunting-dress, as also did Flora, who followed in her mistress's train. All this was the result of the fairy Tulip's protection, who, it must be allowed, had conducted the affair with care and success. The pretty cottage in the wood had been placed there for the accommodation of the princess, and under the figure of an old woman, she it was who had received them.

When the princess appeared to the king, he was so enraptured that he could hardly persuade himself she was mortal. His majesty said all the appropriate and obliging things imaginable, and entreated her at once to make his subjects happy by becoming their queen; "for I am resolved," he concluded, "to abdicate in favor of Prince Valiant, in order to make him more worthy of such a bride." Welcome answered the king with all the politeness natural to so well-educated a princess; then, turning to the two prisoners, who were in the open chariot, hiding their faces with their hands, she asked their pardon of the king, which he immediately granted, while he praised the generosity of her disposition.

The army now received orders to retrace its steps. The prince

mounted on horseback to accompany his beautiful princess, and they were welcomed to the capital with the most exuberant manifestations of loyalty and affection. Grand preparations were made for the wedding, which was dignified and graced by the presence of the six benign fairies who protected the princess.

The faithful Becafica, who had been charmed by the beauty and fidelity of Flora (who, on her side, entertained no less admiration for the noble qualities of the ambassador), begged his master to request, on his behalf, of Welcome, that she would consent to their union, and allow their nuptials to be solemnized on the day he should marry the princess. Valiant pleaded accordingly for his ambassador, and, as may be supposed, succeeded without any great difficulty, and the fairy Tulip, still more liberal than her sisters, gave Flora four mines of gold in the Indies, that her husband might not have the advantage of her in point of wealth. The wedding-feast of the prince and princess lasted several months, and each day added to their attachment. They lived happily, and reigned peaceably over their subjects, until they reached a good old age; and the adventures of the white hind in the forest have been sung in every kingdom of the world.

# *The Lost Spear*

ONCE upon a time, when the fairies were still in this land, and the black man had not been driven inland away from the seashore, a mighty king called all his chiefs together to witness a contest between the four strongest, bravest, and handsomest of the young men of all his subjects. The prize was the king's youngest daughter—the black-eyed Lala—and the one of these four who should throw the assegai the farthest should win her for his bride.

Many princes and chiefs and their followers assembled at the king's village by the sea, and many days went by in feasting and in choosing four from all that host who were at the same time the strongest, bravest, and most handsome there.

At last these four were chosen. Three of them were sons of great chieftains, but the fourth was only a poor herdsman. Yet the Princess Lala, who stood at her father's hut, thought him the best of them all. A sandy plain that stretched between the mountains was chosen, and the four champions stood in a row ready to throw. The first threw his assegai so well that it fell upright into an ant-hill far, far away. The second assegai stood quivering in the bark of a young fir-tree many paces beyond the ant-hill.

The spear of the third pierced the breast of a gold and green sugar-bird that was fluttering over a tall aloe blossom still farther away. But the herdsman, who was fourth, threw his assegai so vigorously that it flew like a flash of lightning up into the heavens, and struck a hawk that was soaring there in search of prey.

Loud were the acclamations of the people, and they adjudged the fourth the winner. The princess wept for joy, but the great

king, who did not wish his daughter to wed a humble herdsman, said:

"Let them throw again with spears that I shall give them. This man's weapon was surely bewitched."

So on the morrow the king sent for fresh spears of gold. And to the princes were given splendid, equally balanced ones; but the herdsman's was clumsy and untrue. Again they threw, and again the herdsman's assegai outdistanced those of the others. This time it flew into the clouds, and was lost to sight in their whiteness.

But the king was unjust, and said: "Not till you have found the spear, and bring it to my feet, shall you win my daughter, the beautiful Lala. Go!"

The princess clung to her father and wept, saying she loved this gallant herdsman; but the king took her arms from round his neck, and bade her go. To disobey the king meant death, and the girl went.

Thus Zandilli, the herdsman, set out in search of the royal assegai. He wandered some days among the mountains, for it was in the wind-clouds on their brows that the spear had disappeared. It was on the fourth day of his wanderings that, while he was gazing down into the depths of a brown pool, a butcher-bird fell at his feet, clutching in his talons a tiny green frog. The frog cried for help, and Zandilli succeeded in frightening the bird away.

The frog expressed its gratitude, and said: "If ever you are in trouble, and think I can help you, close your eyes and call to mind this brown pool, and I shall come to your assistance."

Zandilli thanked the kind frog, who then disappeared in the water.

A little farther on he saw a large black-and-yellow butterfly, impaled upon a thorn of prickly pear. He released it, and the butterfly said:

"I was thrust upon that thorn by a pair of tiny brown hands belonging to a little maid with large black eyes. She was cruel. You are kind, and I am grateful. If ever you are in difficulty or danger call me, and I shall be at your service."

Then the glorious insect spread its wings, and flew away to play with its mates among the crimson orchids.

Night was approaching on the fifth day, and still the lost spear had not been found. It was a warm summer's night, and the moon rose, a great ball of crimson fire, from out the fog in the east.

Zandilli was anxious to find some shelter for the night, and to that end entered a narrow gorge, through which trickled a tiny stream. It was pitch dark in this ravine. Its walls were very high, and he fell into deep water-holes, and stumbled over slippery boulders; but Zandilli persevered, knowing how often small caves are found in these ravines. And such a cave at last he came upon. The moon, now clear of the fog, had floated up into the heavens, and shone into the gorge, lighting up its western wall. Into a large cavity her light fell in a broad pathway of silver.

Zandilli entered boldly; he, who had lived among the mountains all his life, knew no fear. The light of the moon did not enter very far into the cave, and he was too tired to explore the darkness beyond, so he lay down to rest, with his spear close at hand.

He awoke to find the cave in total darkness, and a strange soft music greeted his ears. It was music sweeter than that of the turtle-dove calling to her mate, softer than the murmur of the wind among the grass-bells. Its sound thrilled the listener's heart, and made him long to look upon the being whose voice could discourse such sweet music. Zandilli arose, and crept with steps as noiseless as the leopard's toward the place whence the music came. Nearer and nearer it grew, and as he advanced the cave grew broader and higher, and a pale light seemed to flood the walls.

Louder grew the music at each step, loftier the walls, and more brilliant the light, until suddenly such a sight burst upon his astonished eyes as never mortal had seen before.

A large lake spread its sapphire waters before him. The roof of the cave shone as the sun, and great pillars, which sparkled with the glitter of countless diamonds, raised them-

selves from the waters and were lost in the blazing glory of the dome. In the very center of the lake a magnificent flight of glittering golden steps led to a throne, which sent forth flashes of green fire—being fashioned of a single emerald beautifully carved. The lake seemed boundless, for its shores were lost in darkness.

From out of the shadow in all directions countless large rose-colored lilies came floating, each bearing toward the throne a lovely fairy. It was from these lilies the lovely music floated, for each fairy sat singing as she combed her long golden hair. Never had Zandilli seen such beautiful forms. More delicate-looking were they than the soft wind-flowers that crown the precipices; more beautiful than the crimson orchids. Their hair that spread behind them was not less brilliant than the fiery tail of the great star which comes to warn the black man of approaching drought and famine; and it gleamed against their snowy breasts as does the golden tongue of the arum. Their forms were as graceful as that of the slender antelope; their arms were whiter than the spray which tips the waves. Their brows were crowned with white star-blossoms, and their voices excelled anything Zandilli had ever heard. The lily-boats floated from all sides, and seemed to be guided by some unseen power. As they touched the golden steps the fays stepped from the pink petals, and shaking their golden hair around their shoulders as a mantle, they joined the throngs of others as fair as themselves around the throne.

All this Zandilli gazed upon with eyes large with wonder. Only who it was that sat upon the throne he could not see, for a brilliancy of flashing light clothed the occupant as in a veil. The empty boats dotted the lake, as do the blue water-lilies the quiet reaches of the rivers, floating lazily backward and forward.

Suddenly the music ceased—his presence seemed to have become known to this strange people. There was much whispering among the throngs upon the steps of the throne. Then a broad pathway was opened among them, and a being clothed

in light stepped from the throne to the water's edge, and a silvery voice spoke:

"Mortal, you are not unexpected. You are Zandilli, the herdsman. Your quest is not unknown to us. You seek a royal spear, and dare to aspire to win a royal bride. The moon has risen five times since you vanquished the three princes in throwing the spear. When she shall have shone yet twice upon land and sea, your bride, unless you save her, will have wed another. Yet, have no fear, brave Zandilli, the royal spear is within your reach."

The silvery tones ceased, and Zandilli fell upon his face, and said:

"Oh, great being! whose light is as the sun's, whose wisdom is greater than that of our witch-doctors, help your servant to find that spear which you say is within his reach!"

A strange-shaped canoe of gold shot from the steps of the throne and rested at Zandilli's feet. He entered it fearlessly, and as quick as light he was carried across to the golden steps. The dazzling being who stood there reached a hand to him as he stepped from the canoe. He raised his eyes, and saw before him a woman lovely as the morning. Countless rays of light streamed from a girdle and breastplate of diamonds, and from the flowing robes of silver tissue that clothed her, leaving only the lily-white arms and throat bare. Her golden hair fell to her shapely feet, and was crowned with a wreath of star-flowers.

"Welcome to the land of the Moon-Fairies!" she cried, as she took his hand and led him to a seat beside herself upon the throne. The crowd upon the steps bowed humbly before them as they passed through its midst.

Then Zandilli spoke: "Oh, great queen! whiter than the wind-clouds, fairer than the dawn, tell your servant how best he can serve you and win the spear!"

She bent her eyes, blue as the lake, upon him, and said: "Would that I could say it is yours now—yours to take away; but there is an ancient law among us that forbids even the queen to take from our treasure-trove *anything*, and this golden

spear of royalty which fell at the mouth of this cavern, has been given a place among our treasures."

"It was prophesied in years remote that a mortal would come among us in quest of a weapon that would give the possessor great joy. When he should appear two tasks were to be set him. If he performed them the object of his search should be given him. You, Zandilli, the herdsman, are that mortal, for do you not seek a spear that will give you a lovely bride? We will deliberate upon the tasks to be set you. Meanwhile, you will be shown the beauties of our home by my maidens."

With these words the queen rose and descended to a lily-boat, which bore her quickly away. Now three of the loveliest of the fairies stepped with Zandilli into the golden canoe—wonder after wonder unfolded itself to his astonished gaze. All was glitter and light, but there was one dark cavern, whose walls were lusterless and black as night. Yet in spite of these marvels Zandilli was impatient to win the spear, especially as the queen had spoken of another who was to win the Princess Lala ere two moons had risen.

He therefore begged to be taken back to the queen, who sat again upon her throne. She greeted him with a smile, and laid her lily-white hand upon his bronze arm. "We have decided," she said, "upon your first task. My councilors have made it no easy one. You have seen the black chamber? It is the one blot upon our home. If you can make it as beautiful as each of the others, half your task will be fulfilled. Before the moon has risen again this must be performed, or death will be your doom."

Zandilli was taken to the black chamber; and there he was left alone in the golden canoe, with despair at his heart, for he had no means of beautifying those hideous walls. He thought of the foam-flecked sea, which he should never see again; of the shy maiden who was to have been his bride. He thought of the flowers, the birds, the butterflies. At the thought that then came, he laughed. The butterfly he had saved? Could its help be of use to him? It seemed hopeless.

Zandilli sighed, and, overcome by fatigue, laid himself down to sleep.

The butterfly heard its deliverer's scarce-formed cry for help. So at break of day it called together its brethren and its cousins the fireflies. Then they all flew into the dark cavern. The sound of their fluttering wings awoke Zandilli. Great was his surprise to find the dull walls transformed into a fairy palace of gorgeous wings and tender pale-green gems. The butterflies and fireflies had spread themselves over the entire walls.

When the queen and her followers came to see if the task had been performed, great surprise and joy did they express at the wonderful transformation the mortal had worked. With one voice they cried:

"He has won! He has won!"

All that day was spent in revelry; but the queen was absent. She was with her wise men, discussing the second task.

At the close of the day, the queen spoke thus to Zandilli: "You have completed your first task, and the spear is partly won. It has therefore been placed here upon the steps before my throne. See! This is to be your second task: My maidens' robes are woven from the wings of flies. Our looms are idle, for our store-rooms are empty. To you is given the task of filling a hundred of our boats with the wings of flies." Then the queen disappeared.

Zandilli lay down in the canoe, and gave way to despair. This task seemed far more hopeless than even the first had done. Never more should he see the sun; never should he hunt the leopard again. Never should he see the tumbling streams and cool brown pools, nor see the great black eyes of his princess smile upon him. He fell asleep at last with these sad thoughts upon him.

The frog heard his deliverer's sigh for a sight of the brown pool, and called his brethren and his friends the lizards. Each came with his burden of flies, and soon filled the many boats.

Their busy croaking awoke Zandilli, who found his task performed; and when the queen and her followers came again, they cried:

"He has won! The spear is his!"

Then Zandilli ascended the golden steps to take his well-earned prize. But the queen was loath to let him go. She would have liked to have kept this wonder-worker by her side forever, and she tried to hold him back.

But Zandilli was impatient, and snatched his arm from her grasp. He seized the golden spear, and jumping into the canoe, propelled it with the spear to the edge of the lake, and bounded ashore. In a few short hours he had claimed his bride and they lived in great happiness forever after.

# *Sylvain and Jocosa*

ONCE upon a time there lived in the same village two children, one called Sylvain and the other Jocosa, who were both remarkable for beauty and intelligence. It happened that their parents were not on terms of friendship with each other, on account of some old quarrel which had taken place so long ago that they had quite forgotten what it was all about, and only kept up the feud from force of habit. Sylvain and Jocosa for their parts were far from sharing this enmity, and indeed were never happy when apart. Day after day they fed their flocks of sheep together, and spent the long sunshiny hours in playing or resting upon some shady bank. It happened one day that the fairy of the meadows passed by and saw them, and was so much attracted by their pretty faces and gentle manners that she took them under her protection, and the older they grew the dearer they became to her. At first she showed her interest by leaving in their favorite haunts many little gifts such as they delighted to offer one to the other, for they loved each other so much that their first thought was always, "What will Jocosa like?" or, "What will please Sylvain?" and the fairy took a great delight in their innocent enjoyment of the cakes and sweetmeats she gave them nearly every day. When they were grown up she resolved to make herself known to them, and chose a time when they were sheltering from the noonday sun in the deep shade of a flowery hedgerow. They were startled at first by the sudden apparition of a tall and slender lady dressed all in green and crowned with a garland of flowers. But when she spoke to them sweetly and told them how she had always loved them, and that it was she who had given them all the pretty things which it had so

surprised them to find, they thanked her gratefully and took pleasure in answering the questions she put to them. When she presently bade them farewell, she told them never to tell any one else that they had seen her. "You will often see me again," added she, "and I shall be with you frequently, even when you do not see me." So saying she vanished, leaving them in a state of great wonder and excitement. After this she came often, and taught them numbers of things and showed them many of the marvels of her beautiful kingdom, and at last one day she said to them: "You know that I have always been kind to you. Now I think it is time you did something for me in your turn. You both remember the fountain I call my favorite? Promise me that every morning before the sun rises you will go to it and clear away every stone that impedes its course and every dead leaf or broken twig that sullies its clear waters. I shall take it as a proof of your gratitude to me if you neither forget nor delay this duty, and I promise that so long as the sun's earliest rays find my favorite spring the clearest and sweetest in all my meadows you two shall not be parted from each other."

Sylvain and Jocosa willingly undertook this service, and indeed felt that it was but a very small thing in return for all that the fairy had given and promised to them. So for a long time the fountain was tended with the most scrupulous care and was the clearest and prettiest in all the country round. But one morning in the spring, long before the sun rose, they were hastening toward it from opposite directions, when, tempted by the beauty of the myriads of gay flowers which grew thickly on all sides, they paused each to gather some for the other.

"I will make Sylvain a garland," said Jocosa, and "How pretty Jocosa will look in this crown!" thought Sylvain.

Hither and thither they strayed, led ever farther and farther, for the brightest flowers seemed always just beyond them, until at last they were startled by the first bright rays of the rising sun. With one accord they turned and ran toward the fountain, reaching it at the same moment, though from opposite sides. But what was their horror to see its usually tranquil

waters seething and bubbling, and even as they looked, down rushed a mighty stream, which entirely engulfed it, and Sylvain and Jocosa found themselves parted by a wide and swiftly rushing river. All this had happened with such rapidity that they had only time to utter a cry and each to hold up to the other the flowers they had gathered; but this was explanation enough. Twenty times did Sylvain throw himself into the turbulent waters, hoping to be able to swim to the other side, but each time an irresistible force drove him back upon the bank he had just quitted, while as for Jocosa, she even essayed to cross the flood upon a tree which came floating down torn up by the roots, but her efforts were equally useless. Then with heavy hearts they set out to follow the course of the stream, which had now grown so wide that it was only with difficulty they could distinguish each other. Night and day, over mountains and through valleys, in cold or in heat, they struggled on, enduring fatigue and hunger and every hardship, and consoled only by the hope of meeting once more, until three years had passed, and at last they stood upon the cliffs where the river flowed into the mighty sea.

And now they seemed farther apart than ever, and in despair they tried once more to throw themselves into the foaming waves. But the fairy of the meadows, who had really never ceased to watch over them, did not intend that they should be drowned at last, so she hastily waved her wand, and immediately they found themselves standing side by side upon the golden sand. You may imagine their joy and delight when they realized that their weary struggle was ended, and their utter contentment as they clasped each other by the hand. They had so much to say that they hardly knew where to begin, but they agreed in blaming themselves bitterly for the negligence which had caused all their trouble; and when she heard this the fairy immediately appeared to them. They threw themselves at her feet and implored her forgiveness, which she granted freely, and promised at the same time that now their punishment was ended she would always befriend them. Then she sent for her chariot of green rushes, ornamented with May

dewdrops, which she particularly valued and always collected with great care; and ordered her six short-tailed moles to carry them all back to the well-known pastures, which they did in a remarkably short time; and Sylvain and Jocosa were overjoyed to see their dearly loved home once more after all their toilsome wanderings. The fairy, who had set her mind upon securing their happiness, had in their absence quite made up the quarrel between their parents and gained their consent to the marriage of the faithful lovers; and now she conducted them to the most charming little cottage that can be imagined, close to the fountain, which had once more resumed its peaceful aspect and flowed gently down into the little brook which inclosed the garden and orchard and pasture which belonged to the cottage. Indeed, nothing more could have been thought of, either for Sylvain and Jocosa or for their flocks; and their delight satisfied even the fairy who had planned it all to please them. When they had explored and admired until they were tired they sat down to rest under the rose-covered porch, and the fairy said that to pass the time until the wedding-guests whom she had invited could arrive she would tell them a story. This is it:

### THE YELLOW BIRD

Once upon a time a fairy, who had somehow or other got into mischief, was condemned by the high court of Fairyland to live for several years under the form of some creature, and at the moment of resuming her natural appearance once again to make the fortune of two men. It was left to her to choose what form she would take, and because she loved yellow she transformed herself into a lovely bird with shining golden feathers such as no one had ever seen before. When the time of her punishment was at an end the beautiful yellow bird flew to Bagdad and let herself be caught by a fowler at the precise moment when Badi-al-Zaman was walking up and down outside his magnificent summer palace. This Badi-al-Zaman—whose name means "Wonder-of-the-World"—was looked upon in Bagdad as the most fortunate creature under the sun

because of his vast wealth. But really, what with anxiety about his riches and being weary of everything, and always desiring something he had not, he never knew a moment's real happiness. Even now he had come out of his palace, which was large and splendid enough for fifty kings, weary and cross because he could find nothing new to amuse him. The fowler thought that this would be a favorable opportunity for offering him the marvelous bird, which he felt certain he would buy the instant he saw it. And he was not mistaken, for when Badi-al-Zaman took the lovely prisoner into his own hands, he saw written under its right wing the words, "He who eats my head will become a king," and under its left wing, "He who eats my heart will find a hundred gold pieces under his pillow every morning." In spite of all his wealth he at once began to desire the promised gold, and the bargain was soon completed. Then the difficulty arose as to how the bird was to be cooked; for among all his army of servants not one could Badi-al-Zaman trust. At last he asked the fowler if he were married, and on hearing that he was he made him take the bird home with him and tell his wife to cook it.

"Perhaps," said he, "this will give me an appetite, which I have not had for many a long day, and if so your wife shall have a hundred pieces of silver."

The fowler with great joy ran home to his wife, who speedily made a savory stew of the yellow bird. But when Badi-al-Zaman reached the cottage and began eagerly to search in the dish for its head and its heart he could not find either of them, and turned to the fowler's wife in a furious rage. She was so terrified that she fell upon her knees before him and confessed that her two children had come in just before he arrived, and had so teased her for some of the dish she was preparing that she had presently given the head to one and the heart to the other, since these morsels are not generally much esteemed; and Badi-al-Zaman rushed from the cottage vowing vengeance against the whole family. The wrath of a rich man is generally to be feared, so the fowler and his wife resolved to send their children out of harm's way; but the wife, to console her

husband, confided to him that she had purposely given them the head and heart of the bird because she had been able to read what was written under its wings. So, believing that their children's fortunes were made, they embraced them and sent them forth, bidding them get as far away as possible, to take different roads, and to send news of their welfare. For themselves, they remained hidden and disguised in the town, which was really rather clever of them; but very soon afterward Badi-al-Zaman died of vexation and annoyance at the loss of the promised treasure, and then they went back to their cottage to wait for news of their children. The younger, who had eaten the heart of the yellow bird, very soon found out what it had done for him, for each morning when he awoke he found a purse containing a hundred gold pieces under his pillow. But, as all poor people may remember for their consolation, nothing in the world causes so much trouble or requires so much care as a great treasure. Consequently the fowler's son, who spent with reckless profusion and was supposed to be possessed of a great hoard of gold, was before very long attacked by robbers, and in trying to defend himself was so badly wounded that he died.

The elder brother, who had eaten the yellow bird's head, traveled a long way without meeting with any particular adventure, until at last he reached a large city in Asia, which was all in an uproar over the choosing of a new emir. All the principal citizens had formed themselves into two parties, and it was not until after a prolonged squabble that they agreed that the person to whom the most singular thing happened should be emir. Our young traveler entered the town at this juncture, with his agreeable face and jaunty air, and all at once felt something alight upon his head, which proved to be a snow-white pigeon. Thereupon all the people began to stare and to run after him, so that he presently reached the palace with the pigeon upon his head and all the inhabitants of the city at his heels, and before he knew where he was they made him emir, to his great astonishment.

As there is nothing more agreeable than to command, and

nothing to which people get accustomed more quickly, the young emir soon felt quite at his ease in his new position; but this did not prevent him from making every kind of mistake, and so misgoverning the kingdom that at last the whole city rose in revolt and deprived him at once of his authority and his life—a punishment which he richly deserved, for in the days of his prosperity he disowned the fowler and his wife and allowed them to die in poverty.

"I have told you this story, my dear Sylvain and Jocosa," added the fairy, "to prove to you that this little cottage and all that belongs to it is a gift more likely to bring you happiness and contentment than many things that would at first seem grander and more desirable. If you will faithfully promise me to till your fields and feed your flocks, and will keep your word better than you did before, I will see that you never lack anything that is really for your good."

Sylvain and Jocosa gave their faithful promise, and as they kept it they always enjoyed peace and prosperity. The fairy had asked all their friends and neighbors to their wedding, which took place at once with great festivities and rejoicings, and they lived to a good old age, always loving each other with all their hearts.

# *The Golden Blackbird*

ONCE upon a time there was a great lord who had three sons. He fell very ill, sent for doctors of every kind, even bone-setters, but they none of them could find out what was the matter with him or even give him any relief. At last there came a foreign doctor, who declared that the golden blackbird alone could cure the sick man.

So the old lord despatched his eldest son to look for the wonderful bird, and promised him great riches if he managed to find it and bring it back.

The young man began his journey and soon arrived at a place where four roads met. He did not know which to choose, and tossed his cap in the air, determining that the direction of its fall should decide him. After traveling for two or three days he grew tired of walking without knowing where or for how long, and he stopped at an inn which was filled with merrymakers and ordered something to eat and drink.

"My faith," said he, "it is sheer folly to waste more time hunting for this bird. My father is old, and if he dies I shall inherit his goods."

The old man, after waiting patiently for some time, sent his second son to seek the golden blackbird. The youth took the same direction as his brother, and when he came to the cross-roads he too tossed up which road he should take. The cap fell in the same place as before, and he walked on till he came to the spot where his brother had halted. The latter, who was leaning out of the window of the inn, called to him to stay where he was and amuse himself.

"You are right," replied the youth. "Who knows if I should ever find the golden blackbird, even if I sought the

whole world through for it? At the worst, if the old man dies we shall have his property."

He entered the inn and the two brothers made merry and feasted, till very soon their money was all spent. They even owed something to their landlord, who kept them as hostages till they could pay their debts.

The youngest son set forth in his turn, and he arrived at the place where his brothers were still prisoners. They called to him to stop and did all they could to prevent his going farther.

"No," he replied, "my father trusted me, and I will go all over the world till I find the golden blackbird."

"Bah," said his brothers, "you will never succeed any better than we did. Let him die if he wants to. We will divide the property."

As he went his way he met a little hare, who stopped to look at him and asked:

"Where are you going, my friend?"

"I really don't quite know," answered he. "My father is ill, and he cannot be cured unless I bring him back the golden blackbird. It is a long time since I set out, but no one can tell me where to find it."

"Ah," said the hare, "you have a long way to go yet. You will have to walk at least seven hundred miles before you get to it."

"And how am I to travel such a distance?"

"Mount on my back," said the little hare, "and I will conduct you."

The young man obeyed. At each bound the little hare went seven miles, and it was not long before they reached a castle that was as large and beautiful as a castle could be.

"The golden blackbird is in a little cabin near by," said the little hare, "and you will easily find it. It lives in a little cage, with another cage beside it made all of gold. But whatever you do, be sure not to put it in the beautiful cage, or everybody in the castle will know that you have stolen it."

The youth found the golden blackbird standing on a wooden

perch, but as stiff and rigid as if he was dead. And beside the beautiful bird was the cage of gold.

"Perhaps he would revive if I were to put him in that lovely cage," thought the youth.

The moment the golden blackbird had touched the bars of the splendid cage he awoke and began to whistle, so that all the servants of the castle ran to see what was the matter, saying that he was a thief and must be put in prison.

"No," he answered, "I am not a thief. If I have taken the golden blackbird, it is only that it may cure my father, who is ill, and I have traveled more than seven hundred miles in order to find it."

"Well," they replied, "we will let you go, and will even give you the golden blackbird if you are able to bring us the porcelain maiden."

The youth departed, weeping, and met the little hare, who was munching wild thyme.

"What are you crying for, my friend?" asked the hare.

"It is because," he answered, "the castle people will not allow me to carry off the golden blackbird without giving them the porcelain maiden in exchange."

"You have not followed my advice," said the little hare. "And you have put the golden blackbird into the fine cage."

"Alas! yes!"

"Don't despair. The porcelain maiden is a young girl, beautiful as Venus, who dwells two hundred miles from here. Jump on my back and I will take you there."

The little hare, who took seven miles in a stride, was there in no time at all, and he stopped on the borders of a lake.

"The porcelain maiden," said the hare to the youth, "will come here to bathe with her friends, while I just eat a mouthful of thyme to refresh me. When she is in the lake be sure you hide her clothes, which are of dazzling whiteness, and do not give them back to her unless she consents to follow you."

The little hare left him, and almost immediately the porcelain maiden arrived with her friends. She undressed herself

and got into the water. Then the young man glided up noiselessly and laid hold of her clothes, which he hid under a rock at some distance.

When the porcelain maiden was tired of playing in the water she came out to dress herself, but though she hunted for her clothes high and low she could find them nowhere. Her friends helped her in the search, but, seeing at last that it was of no use, they left her alone on the bank, weeping bitterly.

"Why do you cry?" said the young man, approaching her.

"Alas!" answered she, "while I was bathing some one stole my clothes, and my friends have abandoned me."

"I will find your clothes if you will only come with me."

And the porcelain maiden agreed to follow him, and after having given up her clothes the young man bought a small horse for her which went like the wind. The little hare brought them both back to seek for the golden blackbird, and when they drew near the castle where it lived the little hare said to the young man:

"Now, do be a little sharper than you were before, and you will manage to carry off both the golden blackbird and the porcelain maiden. Take the golden cage in one hand and leave the bird in the old cage where he is, and bring that away too."

The little hare then vanished. The youth did as he was bid, and the castle servants never noticed that he was carrying off the golden blackbird. When he reached the inn where his brothers were detained he delivered them by paying their debt. They set out all together, but as the two elder brothers were jealous of the success of the youngest, they took the opportunity as they were passing by the shores of a lake to throw themselves upon him, seize the golden blackbird, and fling him in the water. Then they continued their journey, taking with them the porcelain maiden, in the firm belief that their brother was drowned. But happily he had snatched in falling at a tuft of rushes and called loudly for help. The little hare came running to him and said: "Take hold of my leg and pull yourself out of the water."

When he was safe on shore the little hare said to him:

"Now, this is what you have to do: dress yourself like a Breton seeking a place as stable-boy, and go and offer your services to your father. Once there, you will easily be able to make him understand the truth."

The young man did as the little hare bade him, and he went to his father's castle and inquired if they were not in want of a stable-boy.

"Yes," replied his father, "very much indeed. But it is not an easy place. There is a little horse in the stable which will not let any one go near it, and it has already kicked to death several people who have tried to groom it."

"I will undertake to groom it," said the youth. "I never saw the horse I was afraid of yet."

The little horse allowed itself to be rubbed down without a toss of its head and without a kick.

"Good gracious!" exclaimed the master. "How is it that he lets you touch him when no one else can go near him?"

"Perhaps he knows me," answered the stable-boy.

Two or three days later the master said to him: "The porcelain maiden is here; but though she is as lovely as the dawn, she is so wicked that she scratches every one that approaches her. Try if she will accept your services."

When the youth entered the room where she was the golden blackbird broke forth into a joyful song, and the porcelain maiden sang too and jumped for joy.

"Good gracious!" cried the master. "The porcelain maiden and the golden blackbird know you too?"

"Yes," replied the youth, "and the porcelain maiden can tell you the whole truth if she only will."

Then she told all that had happened, and how she had consented to follow the young man who had captured the golden blackbird.

"Yes," added the youth, "I delivered my brothers, who were kept prisoners in an inn, and as a reward they threw me into a lake. So I disguised myself and came here in order to prove the truth to you."

So the old lord embraced his son and promised that he should inherit all his possessions, and he banished to a far country the two elder ones, who had deceived him and had tried to slay their own brother.

The young man married the porcelain maiden and had a splendid wedding-feast, and they never forgot the little hare who had aided them in their troubles.

# *The Enchanted Whistle*

THERE was once a rich and powerful king, who had a daughter remarkable for her beauty. When this princess arrived at an age to be married, he caused a proclamation to be made by sound of a trumpet, and by placards on all the walls of his kingdom, to the effect that all those who had any pretension to her hand were to assemble in a widespread meadow.

Her would-be suitors being in this way gathered together, the princess would throw into the air a golden apple, and whoever succeeded in catching it would then have to solve three problems, after doing which he might marry the princess, and, the king having no son, inherit the kingdom.

On the day appointed the meeting took place. The princess threw the golden apple into the air, but not one of the first three who caught it was able to complete the easiest task set him, and neither of them attempted those which were to follow.

At last the golden apple, thrown by the princess into the air for the fourth time, fell into the hands of a young shepherd, who was the handsomest, but at the same time the poorest of all the competitors.

The first problem given him to solve—certainly as difficult as a problem in mathematics—was this:

The king had caused one hundred hares to be shut up in a stable; he who should succeed in leading them out to feed upon the meadow where the meeting was being held, the next morning, and conduct them all back to the stable the next evening, would have solved the first problem.

When this proposition was made to the young shepherd he

asked to be allowed a day to reflect upon it; the next day he would say "Yes" or "No" to it.

The request appeared so just to the king that it was granted to him.

He immediately took his way to the forest, to meditate there on the means of accomplishing the task set him.

With down-bent head he slowly traversed a narrow path running beside a brook, when he came upon a little old woman with snow-white hair, but sparkling eyes, who inquired the cause of his sadness.

The young shepherd replied, shaking his head:

"Alas! nobody can be of any assistance to me, and yet I greatly desire to wed the king's daughter."

"Don't give way to despair so quickly," replied the little old woman; "tell me all about your trouble, and perhaps I may be able to get you out of your difficulty."

The young shepherd's heart was so heavy that he needed no entreaty to tell her his story.

"Is that all?" said the little old woman; "in that case you have not much to despair about."

And she took from her pocket an ivory whistle and gave it to him.

This whistle was just like other whistles in appearance; so the shepherd, thinking that it needed to be blown in a particular way, turned to ask the little old woman how this was, but she had disappeared.

Full of confidence, however, in what he regarded as a good genius, he went next day to the palace and said to the king:

"I accept, sir, and have come in search of the hares to lead them to the meadow."

On hearing this the king rose, and said to his minister of the interior:

"Have all the hares turned out of the stable."

The young shepherd placed himself on the threshold of the door to count them; but the first was already far away when the last was set at liberty; so much so, that when he reached the meadow he had not a single hare with him.

He sat himself down pensively, not daring to believe in the virtue of his whistle. However, he had no other resource, and placing the whistle to his lips he blew into it with all his might.

The whistle gave forth a sharp and prolonged sound.

Immediately, to his great astonishment, from right and left, from before him and behind him—from all sides in fact—leaped the hundred hares, and set to quietly browsing on the meadow around him.

News was brought to the king how the young shepherd had probably solved the problem of the hares.

The king conferred on the matter with his daughter.

Both were greatly vexed; for if the young shepherd succeeded with the two other problems as well as he had with the first, the princess would become the wife of a simple peasant, than which nothing could be more humiliating to royal pride.

"You think over the matter," said the princess to her father, "and I will do the same."

The princess retired to her chamber, and disguised herself in such a way as to render herself unrecognizable; then she had a horse brought for her, mounted it, and went to the young shepherd.

The hundred hares were frisking joyously about him.

"Will you sell me one of your hares?" asked the young princess.

"I would not sell you one of my hares for all the gold in the world," replied the shepherd; "but you may gain one."

"At what price?" asked the princess.

"By dismounting from your horse and sitting by me on the grass for a quarter of an hour."

The princess made some objections, but as there was no other means of obtaining the hare, she descended to the ground, and seated herself by the young shepherd.

The hundred hares leaped and bounded around him.

At the end of a quarter of an hour, during which the young shepherd said a hundred tender things to her, she arose and

claimed her hare, which the shepherd, faithful to his promise, gave her.

The princess joyfully shut it in a basket which she carried at the bow of her saddle, and rode back toward the palace.

But hardly had she ridden a quarter of a league, when the young shepherd placed his whistle to his lips and blew into it; and, at this imperative call, the hare forced up the lid of the basket, sprang to the ground, and made off as fast as his legs would carry him.

A moment afterward, the shepherd saw a peasant coming toward him, mounted on a donkey. It was the old king, also disguised, who had quitted the palace with the same intention as his daughter.

A large bag hung from the donkey's saddle.

"Will you sell me one of your hares?" he asked of the young shepherd.

"My hares are not for sale," replied the shepherd; "but they may be gained."

"What must one do to gain one?"

The shepherd considered for a moment.

"You must kiss three times the tail of your donkey," he said.

This strange condition was greatly repugnant to the old king, who tried his hardest to escape it, going so far as to offer fifty thousand francs for a single hare, but the young shepherd would not budge from the terms he had named. At last the king, who held absolutely to getting possession of one of the hares, submitted to the conditions, humiliating as they were for a king. Three times he kissed the tail of his donkey, who was greatly surprised at a king doing him so much honor; and the shepherd, faithful to his promise, gave him the hare demanded with so much insistence.

The king tucked his hare into his bag, and rode away at the utmost speed of his donkey.

But he had hardly gone a quarter of a league, when a shrill whistle sounded in the air, on hearing which the hare nibbled at the bag so vigorously as speedily to make a hole, out of which it leaped to the ground and fled.

"Well?" inquired the princess, on seeing the king return to the palace.

"I hardly know what to tell you, my daughter," replied the king. "This young shepherd is an obstinate fellow, who refused to sell me one of his hares at any price. But don't distress yourself; he'll not get so easily through the two other tasks as he has done with this one."

It need hardly be said that the king made no allusion to the conditions under which he had for a moment had possession of one of his hares, nor that the princess said nothing about the terms of her similar want of success.

"That is exactly my case," she remarked; "I could not induce him to part with one of his hares, neither for gold nor silver."

When evening came, the shepherd returned with his hares; he counted them before the king; there was not one more or one less. They were given back to the minister of the interior, who had them driven into the stable.

Then the king said:

"The first problem has been solved; the second now remains to be accomplished. Pay great attention, young man."

The shepherd listened with all his ears.

"Up yonder, in my granary," the king went on, "there are one hundred measures of gray peas, and one hundred measures of lentils; lentils and peas are mixed together; if you succeed to-night, and without light, in separating them, you will have solved the second problem."

"I'll do my best," replied the young shepherd.

And the king called his minister of the interior, who conducted the young man up to the granary, locked him in, and handed the key to the king.

As it was already night, and as for such a labor there was no time to be lost, the shepherd put his whistle to his lips, and blew a long, shrill note.

Instantly five thousand ants appeared, and set to work separating the lentils from the peas, and never stopped until the whole were divided into two heaps.

The next morning the king, to his great astonishment, beheld the work accomplished. He tried to raise objections, but was unable to find any ground whatever.

All he could now do was to trust to the third trial, which, after the shepherd's success in the other two trials, he feared to be not very hopeful. However, as the third was the most difficult of all, he did not give way to despair.

"What now remains for you to do," he said, "is to go into the bread-room, and, in a single night, eat the whole week's bread, which is stored there. If to-morrow morning not a single crumb is to be found, I will consent to your marrying my daughter."

That same evening the young shepherd was conducted to the bread-room of the palace, which was so full of bread that only a very small space near the door remained unoccupied.

But at midnight, when all was quiet in the palace, the shepherd sounded his whistle. In a moment ten thousand mice fell to gnawing at the bread in such a fashion that the next morning not a single crumb remained in the place.

The young man then hammered at the door with all his might, and called out:

"Make haste and open the door, please, for I'm hungry!"

The third task was thus victoriously accomplished, as the others had been.

Nevertheless, the king tried hard to get out of his engagement.

He had a sack, big enough to hold six measures of wheat, brought; and, having called a good number of his courtiers about him, said: "Tell us as many falsehoods as will fill this sack, and when it is full you shall have my daughter."

Then the shepherd repeated all the falsehoods he could think of; but the day was half spent, and he was at the end of his fibs, and still the sack was far from being full.

"Well," he went on, "while I was guarding my hares the princess came to me disguised as a peasant, and, to get one of my hares, permitted me to kiss her."

The princess, who, not in the least suspecting what he was

going to say, had not been able to close his mouth, became as red as a cherry; so much so that the king began to think that the young shepherd's tarradiddle might possibly be true.

"The sack is not yet full, though you have just dropped a *very* big falsehood into it," cried the king. "Go on."

The shepherd bowed and continued: "A moment after the princess was gone, I saw his Majesty, disguised as a peasant and mounted on a donkey. His Majesty also came to buy one of my hares; seeing, then, what an eager desire he had to obtain a hare from me, what do you imagine I compelled him to do?"

"Enough! enough!" cried the king; "the sack is full." A week later the young shepherd married the princess.

# *Jungfrau Maleen*

THERE was once upon a time a king's son, who went a-wooing the daughter of another mighty king, and her name was Jungfrau Maleen. Her father, however, refused his permission to the match, because he wished her to marry some one else. But they both still loved one another so dearly, that Jungfrau Maleen told her father she could not and would not marry any one except this prince. When she said so, her father flew into a great passion, and caused a gloomy tower to be built, into which no ray of either sun or moon could penetrate. When it was completed he said to his daughter: "For seven years you shall sit therein; and at the end of that period I will come and see if your stubborn disposition is conquered." Meat and drink sufficient for these seven years were carried into the tower, and then the princess and her maid were led into it, and bricked up, so that earth and heaven were shut out from them. They were quite in darkness, and knew no difference between day and night. The prince often came to the outside of the tower and called their names, but they heard nothing, for no sound could penetrate through the thick walls. What could they do, then, except weep and lament their fate! So time passed by; and, by the decreasing of their food and drink, they perceived that the end of their imprisonment was approaching. They imagined that their release was at hand; but no sound of a hammer was to be heard, nor were any stones picked out of the wall, and it seemed as if the king had forgotten them. So, when they had sufficient food left for only a few days, and the prospect of a miserable death stared them in the face, Jungfrau Maleen said to her companion, "It is time now that we should try to break through the wall."

So saying, she took their bread-knife, and picked and scraped away the mortar round one stone; and when she was tired, the maid assisted her. After a long time they succeeded in taking out one stone, then a second, and a third, and thus, after three days' labor, a ray of light illumined their cell; and then they made the opening so large that they could peep through it. The heaven was blue and a fresh breeze came in their faces, but how mournful looked everything around! The castle of the king lay in ruins; the towns and villages, as far as the eye could reach, were burned to the ground; the fields far and near were laid waste; and not one human being was to be seen. Soon the opening in the wall was so large that they could pass through it; and the maiden first jumping out, her mistress followed her. But where were they to turn? Enemies had depopulated the whole kingdom, and driven away or slain the king, with all his subjects. The pair therefore wandered on and on, seeking some happier country; but nowhere could they find a shelter, or any man to give them bread to eat, and their hunger compelled them to eat the burned roots of nettles.

However, after much weary traveling, they did at last come to cultivated land, and there, at every house, they offered their services; but nobody would take them in or show them any pity. At last they arrived at a large city, and went to the king's palace; but there, also, they were on the point of being turned back, when the cook told them they might stop and serve as kitchen-maids if they liked.

Now the son of this king was the very same who was betrothed to Jungfrau Maleen, and his father had engaged him to another maiden, who was as wickedly disposed in her heart as she was ugly in her looks. When the two travelers arrived, the wedding-day had been already appointed, and the bride was come, but she had shut herself up in her room, and would not be seen, because of her ugliness, and Jungfrau Maleen was ordered to take in her meals. When the day came that the betrothed couple should go to church, the bride-elect was so ashamed of her ugliness that she feared she should

be laughed at and derided by the common people if she showed herself to them. So she said to Jungfrau Maleen: "A great piece of luck is presented to you, for I have hurt my foot and cannot walk at all on the road; so you shall put on my bridal clothes, and take my place; a greater honor could not have fallen to your share."

Jungfrau Maleen, however, refused, and said, "I desire no honor that does not belong to me"; and she would not be tempted even with gold. At last the bride-elect exclaimed passionately: "If you do not obey me, it shall cost you your life. I have only to say one word, and your head will lie at my feet."

Jungfrau Maleen was now forced to comply, and she arrayed herself in the bridal clothes and ornaments. As soon as she appeared in the royal apartments all were astonished at her great beauty, and the king told his son she was the bride whom he had chosen for him, and it was time now to go to church. The prince was astonished, and thought to himself: "She looks like my Jungfrau Maleen, and I almost believe it is she; but no! she is dead, or shut up in the tower." He took the maiden by the hand, and led her to the church, and on the road they passed a nettle-bush, whereupon the bride sang in a strange language:

"Nettle-bush! O nettle-bush!
Have you forgot the day
When I cooked your juicy roots,
My hunger sharp to stay?"

"What did you say then?" asked the prince. "Nothing! I was only thinking of Jungfrau Maleen," replied the seeming bride. He marveled that she should know her, but he said nothing, and when they came to the church steps she sang:

"Church steps, break not, I pray,
The true bride comes not to-day."

"What did you say?" asked the prince. "Nothing," she replied, as before; "I was but thinking of Jungfrau Maleen."

"Do you know that maiden, then?" asked the prince. "No, how should I? I have only heard of her," said she; and when they passed through the church door she sang:

"Church door, crack not, I pray,
The true bride comes not to-day."

"What did you say?" asked the prince a third time. "Alas! I was only thinking of Jungfrau Maleen," she said. Then he drew out a costly chain and fastened it around her neck, and thereupon they walked into the church, and the priest, joining their hands together at the altar, married them in due form. The ceremony over, the bridegroom led back the bride, but she never spoke a single word all the way home. As soon as they arrived at the palace, she hastened into the bride's chamber, and, laying aside her beautiful clothes and ornaments, she put on her gray kirtle, but kept the chain which she had received from the bridegroom round her neck.

When night came, and it was time for the bride to be ushered into the bridegroom's chamber, the ugly maiden let fall her veil over her features, that the deceit might not be discovered. As soon as they were alone, the bridegroom asked her, "What did you say to the nettle-bush which we passed on the road?"

"To what nettle-bush?" she asked; "I spoke to no nettle-bush!"

"If you did not, you are not my real bride," said he. Thereupon she left the room, and, seeking Jungfrau Maleen, asked her what she had said to the nettle-bush. She sang the words over:

"Nettle-bush! O nettle-bush!
Have you forgot the day
When I cooked your juicy roots,
My hunger sharp to stay?"

And as soon as she had done, the bride ran back to the room and repeated them to the prince. "But what did you say to the church steps as we passed up them?" he inquired. "To

the church steps!" she echoed in surprise; "I spoke to none." "Then you are not the right bride!" said the bridegroom again. "I will go and ask my maid what my thoughts were," said the bride; and, seeking Jungfrau Maleen, she inquired of her what she had said. The maid repeated the words:

"Church steps, break not, I pray,
The true bride comes not to-day."

"That shall cost you your life!" exclaimed the bride; but, hastening back to the chamber, she told the prince the words which she had just heard. "But what did you say to the church door?" he inquired next. "To the church door!" she replied; "I spoke to no church door."

"Then you are not the right bride," said the prince. Thereupon away she went a third time to Jungfrau Maleen, and inquired what she had said. The maid repeated the words:

"Church door, crack not, I pray,
The true bride comes not to-day."

"Your neck shall be broken for saying so!" exclaimed the bride in a rage; but, hastening back to the chamber, she repeated the words she had just heard to the bridegroom.

"But where have you put the chain I gave you at the church door?" asked the prince.

"What chain? you gave me no chain?" exclaimed the bride. "But I hung it round your neck myself, and fastened it myself," said the bridegroom; "and if you do not remember that, you are not the right bride." With that he tore the veil from her face, and when he saw her extreme ugliness, he exclaimed, springing away from her, "Who are you? whence come you?"

"I am your betrothed bride," she replied; "but, because I feared the people would mock me if I showed myself to them, I ordered our kitchen-maid to put on my dresses, and go to church in my place."

"Where is the girl then, now? Go and fetch her immediately," said the prince.

She went out and told the other servants that the kitchen-maid was an enchantress, and that they must drag her away from the court and cut off her head. The servants soon caught the maiden, and would have done as they were told; but she cried so loudly for help that the prince heard her voice, and hastening out of his room gave orders for the maiden's instant release. Lights were immediately brought, and then the prince perceived round the maiden's neck the gold chain which he had given her at the church door.

"You are the true bride who went to church with me!" he exclaimed; "come with me now!" As soon as they were alone he said to her: "On the way to church you named Jungfrau Maleen, who was once betrothed to me. Now, if I thought it possible, I should say that you were that maiden, for you are so like to her."

"I am Jungfrau Maleen!" she replied; "and for seven long years have I been shut up in darkness; hunger and thirst, too, I have suffered; and in poverty and distress have I lived ever since; but on this day the sun shines again. I did, indeed, accompany you to church, and it was to me that you were married."

So the prince recovered his true bride, Jungfrau Maleen, and with her lived happily for many long years.

# *The Wood-Cutter's Child*

ONCE upon a time, near a large forest, there dwelt a wood-cutter and his wife, who had only one child, a little girl three years old: but they were so poor that they had scarcely food sufficient for every day in the week, and often they were puzzled to know what they should get to eat. One morning the wood-cutter, his heart full of care, went into the wood to work; and, as he chopped the trees, there stood before him a tall and beautiful woman, having a crown of shining stars upon her head, who thus addressed him: "I am the guardian angel of every Christian child; thou art poor and needy; bring me thy child, and I will take her with me. I will be her mother, and henceforth she shall be under my care." The wood-cutter consented, and calling his child, gave her to the angel, who carried her to the land of Happiness. There everything went happily; she ate sweet bread, and drank pure milk; her clothes were gold, and her playfellows were beautiful children. When she attained her fourteenth year, the guardian angel called her to her side, and said: "My dear child, I have a long journey for thee. Take these keys of the thirteen doors of the land of Happiness: twelve of them thou mayest open, and behold the glories therein; but the thirteenth, to which this little key belongs, thou art forbidden to open. Beware! if thou dost disobey, harm will befall thee."

The maiden promised to be obedient, and, when the guardian angel was gone, began her visits to the mansions of Happiness. Every day one door was unclosed, until she had seen all the twelve. In each mansion there sat an angel, surrounded by a bright light. The maiden rejoiced at the glory, and the

child who accompanied her rejoiced with her. Now the forbidden door alone remained. A great desire possessed the maiden to know what was hidden there; and she said to the child: "I will not quite open it, nor will I go in, I will only unlock the door, so that we may peep through the chink." "No, no," said the child; "that will be a sin. The guardian angel has forbidden it, and misfortune would soon fall upon us."

At this the maiden was silent, but the desire still remained in her heart, and tormented her continually, so that she had no peace. One day, however, all the children were away, and she thought, "Now I am alone and can peep in; no one will know what I do"; so she found the keys, and, taking them in her hand, placed the right one in the lock and turned it around. Then the door sprang open, and she saw three angels sitting on a throne, surrounded by a great light. The maiden remained a little while standing in astonishment; and then, putting her finger in the light, she drew it back, and found it covered with gold. Then great alarm seized her, and, shutting the door hastily, she ran away. But her fear only increased more and more, and her heart beat so violently that she thought it would burst; the gold also on her finger would not come off, although she washed it and rubbed it with all her strength.

Not long afterward the guardian angel came back from her journey, and, calling the maiden to her, demanded the keys of the mansion. As she delivered them up, the angel looked in her face, and asked: "Hast thou opened the thirteenth door?" "No," answered the maiden.

Then the angel laid her hand upon the maiden's heart, and felt how violently it was beating; and she knew that her command had been disregarded, and that the girl had opened the door. Then she asked again: "Hast thou opened the thirteenth door?" "No," said the maiden, for the second time.

Then the angel perceived that the girl's finger had become golden from touching the light, and she knew that she must be guilty; and she asked her for the third time: "Hast thou

opened the thirteenth door?" "No," said the maiden again.

Then the guardian angel replied: "Thou hast not obeyed me, nor done my bidding; therefore thou art no longer worthy to remain among good children."

And the maiden sank down into a deep sleep, and when she awoke she found herself in the midst of a wilderness. She wished to call out, but she had lost her voice. Then she sprang up, and tried to run away; but wherever she turned thick bushes held her back, so that she could not escape. In the deserted spot in which she was inclosed there stood an old hollow tree; this was her dwelling-place. In this place she slept by night; and when it rained and blew she found shelter within it. Roots and wild berries were her food, and she sought for them as far as she could reach. In the autumn she collected the leaves of the trees, and laid them in her hole; and when the frost and snow of the winter came, she clothed herself with them, for her clothes had dropped into rags. But during the sunshine she sat outside the tree, and her long hair fell down on all sides and covered her like a mantle. Thus she remained a long time, experiencing the misery and poverty of the world.

But, once, when the trees had become green again, the king of the country was hunting in the forest, and, as a bird flew into the bushes which surrounded the wood, he dismounted, and, tearing the brushwood aside, cut a path for himself with his sword. When he had at last made his way through, he saw a beautiful maiden, who was clothed from head to foot with her own golden locks, sitting under the tree. He stood in silence, and looked at her for some time in astonishment; at last he said: "Child, how came you into this wilderness?" But the maiden answered not, for she had become dumb. Then the king asked: "Will you go with me to my castle?" At that she nodded her head, and the king, taking her in his arms, put her on his horse and rode away home. Then he gave her beautiful clothing, and everything in abundance. Still she could not speak; but her beauty was so great, and so won

upon the king's heart, that after a little while he married her.

When about a year had passed away the queen brought a son into the world, and the same night, while lying alone in her bed, the guardian angel appeared to her, and said:

"Wilt thou tell the truth, and confess that thou didst unlock the forbidden door? For then will I open thy mouth, and give thee again the power of speech; but if thou remainest obstinate in thy sin, then will I take from thee thy new-born babe."

And the power to answer was given to her, but her heart was hardened, and she said, "No, I did not open the door"; and at these words the guardian angel took the child out of her arms and disappeared with him.

The next morning, when the child was not to be seen, a murmur arose among the people that their queen was a murderess, who had destroyed her only son; but, although she heard everything, she could say nothing. Still the king did not believe the ill report, because of his great love for her.

About a year afterward another son was born, and on the night of his birth the guardian angel again appeared, and asked: "Wilt thou confess that thou didst open the forbidden door? Then will I restore to thee thy son, and give thee the power of speech; but if thou hardenest thyself in thy sin, then will I take this new-born babe also with me."

Then the queen answered again, "No, I did not open the door"; so the angel took the second child out of her arms and bore him away. On the morrow, when the infant could not be found, the people said openly that the queen had slain him, and the king's councilors advised that she should be brought to trial. But the king's affection was still so great that he would not believe it, and he commanded his councilors never again to mention the report on pain of death.

The next year a beautiful little girl was born, and for the third time the guardian angel appeared and said to the queen, "Follow me"; and taking her by the hand, she led her to the kingdom of Happiness, and showed to her the two other chil-

dren who were playing merrily. The queen rejoiced at the sight, and the angel said: "Is thy heart not yet softened? If thou wilt confess that thou didst unlock the forbidden door, then will I restore to thee both thy sons." But the queen again answered, "No, I did not open it"; and at these words she sank upon the earth, and her third child was taken from her.

When this was rumored abroad the next day, all the people exclaimed, "The queen is a murderess! she must be condemned!" and the king could not this time repulse his councilors. Thereupon a trial was held, and since the queen could make no good answer or defense, she was condemned to die upon a funeral pile. The wood was collected, she was bound to the stake, and the fire was lighted all around her. Then the iron pride of her heart began to soften, and she was moved to repentance, and she thought, "Could I but now, before my death, confess that I opened the door!" And her tongue was loosened, and she cried aloud: "Thou good angel, I confess." At these words the rain descended from heaven and extinguished the fire; then a great light shone above, and the angel appeared and descended upon the earth, and by her side were the queen's two sons, one on her right hand and the other on her left, and in her arms she bore the new-born babe. Then the angel restored to the queen her three children, and loosening her tongue, promised her a happy future, and said: "Whoever will repent and confess their sins, they shall be forgiven."

# *Soria Moria Castle*

ONCE on a time there lived a poor couple who had a son whose name was Halvor. Ever since he was a little boy he would turn his hand to nothing, but just sat there and groped about the ashes.

His father and mother often put him out to learn this and that trade, but Halvor could stay nowhere; when he had been there a day or two, he ran away from his master, and never stopped till he was at home, poking about the cinders.

Well, one day a skipper came and asked Halvor if he hadn't a mind to be with him, and go to sea and see strange lands. Yes, Halvor would like that very much, so he wasn't long in getting himself ready.

How long they sailed I am sure I cannot tell; but the end of it was they fell into a great storm, and when it was blown over and all was still again, they could not tell where they were. They had been driven away to a strange coast, which none of them knew anything about.

Well, as there was just no wind at all, they stayed lying windbound there, and Halvor asked the skipper's leave to go on shore and look about him. He would sooner go, he said, than lie there and sleep.

"Do you think now you're fit to show yourself before folk?" asked the skipper.

But Halvor stuck to his wish, and so at last he got leave; but he was to be sure and come back as soon as ever it began to blow. So off he went and found a lovely land. Wherever he went there were fine, large, flat corn fields and rich meads, but he could not catch a glimpse of a living soul.

It began to blow, but Halvor thought he had not seen

enough yet, and he wanted to walk a little farther—just to see if he could not meet some one; so he walked on, and after a while he came to a broad highroad, so smooth and even you might easily roll an egg about it.

Halvor followed this road, and when evening began to draw in he saw a great castle, ever so far off, from which the sunbeams shone. He had now walked the whole day and hadn't taken a bit to eat with him, so now he was as hungry as a hunter; but still the nearer he came to the castle the more afraid he grew.

In the castle kitchen a great fire was blazing, and Halvor went into it, but such a kitchen he had never seen in all his life, it was so grand and fine. There were vessels of silver and vessels of gold, but not a living soul. So when Halvor had stood there a while and no one came out, he went and opened a door, and there inside sat a princess, who spun upon a spinning-wheel.

"Nay, nay, now," she called out, "dare Christian folk come hither? You had best be off about your business, if you don't want the troll to gobble you up; for here lives a troll with three heads."

"All one to me," said the lad. "I'd be just as glad to hear he had four heads besides; I'd like to see what kind of a fellow he is. As for going, I will not go at all, I have done no harm; but meat you must give me, for I'm nearly starved to death."

When Halvor had eaten his fill, the princess told him to try if he could brandish the sword that hung against the wall; but no, he could not brandish it, he could not even lift it up.

"Oh!" said the princess, "now you must go and take a pull of that flask that hangs by its side; that is what the troll does every time he goes out to use the sword."

Halvor took a pull, and in the twinkling of an eye he could brandish the sword like anything! Now he thought it high time the troll came; and lo! just then up came the troll, puffing and blowing. Halvor jumped behind the door.

"Ho! ho!" said the troll, as he put his head in at the door, "what a smell of Christian man's blood!"

"Ah," said Halvor, "you'll soon know that to your cost!" and with that he hewed off all his heads.

Now the princess was so glad she was free, she both danced and sang; but then all at once she called her sisters to mind, and said:

"Would my sisters were free, too!"

"Where are they?" asked Halvor.

Well, she told him all about it; one had been taken away by a troll to his castle, which lay fifty miles off, and the other by another troll to his castle, which was fifty miles farther still.

"But now," said she, "you must first help me to get this ugly carcass out of the house."

Yes, Halvor was so strong he swept everything away, and made it all clean and tidy in no time. Next morning he set off at peep of dawn to try and find the princess's sisters, but when he saw the first castle he grew a little bit afraid: it was far grander than the first, and here, too, there was no living soul to be seen.

So Halvor went into the kitchen, and, as there was no one there, he passed farther into the house.

"Nay, nay," cried the princess, "you must not come here. I don't know how long it is since I came, I'm sure, but I have not seen a Christian since. It will be best for you to get away as quickly as you can, for here lives a troll who has six heads."

"No, I shouldn't go," said Halvor, "even if he had six more heads!"

"He will take you up and swallow you down alive," said the princess.

But it was no good, Halvor would not go; he wasn't at all afraid of the troll, but meat and drink he must have, for he was very hungry after his long journey. Well, he got as much of that as he wished, but then the princess wanted him to be off again.

"No!" said Halvor, "I have nothing to be afraid about, and I have done no harm."

"He won't stay to ask that," said the princess. "He will take you without leave or law; but as you will not go, just see if you can brandish that sword, which the troll wields in war."

He could not move it; and then the princess said he must have a drink from the flask which hung beside it, and when he had done that he could brandish it easily.

Just then the troll came back, and he was both stout and big, so much so that he had to go sideways to get through the door. When the troll had his first head in, he called out:

"Ho! ho! what a smell of Christian man's blood!"

But that very moment Halvor hewed off his first head, and so with all the rest as they popped in.

The princess was overjoyed; but just then she began to think of her sisters, and wished aloud that they were free. Halvor thought that might easily be done, and wanted to be off at once; but first he had to help the princess to get the carcass of the troll out of the way, so he could not start till next morning.

It was a very long way to the castle, and he had to walk fast; but about nightfall he saw the castle, which was far finer and grander than either of the others. This time he wasn't the least afraid, but walked straight through the kitchen and into the castle. There sat a princess, who was so pretty there was no end to her loveliness.

She, too, like the others, told him there had not been Christian folk there ever since she came, and she bade him go away, else the troll would most certainly gobble him up. This troll, she told him, was very ugly, with nine heads.

"Well, well," said Halvor. "If he had nine other heads still, I would not go away."

The princess again begged him to go away, as she was sure the troll would eat him alive, but Halvor said:

"Let him come as soon as he likes; I really do not mind."

So she gave him the troll's sword, and bade him take a pull at the flask, that he might be able to brandish it easily.

Just then back came the troll, puffing and blowing and tearing along. He was far stouter and bigger than the other two, and he also had to turn sideways to get through the door. So when he got his first head in, he said, as the others had said:

"Ho, ho! what a smell of Christian man's blood!"

That very moment Halvor hewed off the first head, and then all the rest; but the last was the toughest of them all, and it was the hardest bit of work Halvor had ever had to do to get it hewn off, although he knew very well he had strength enough to do it.

So all the princesses came together to that castle, which was called *Soria Moria Castle,* and they were very glad and happy. They were all fond of Halvor, and Halvor of them, and he might choose the one he liked best for his bride; but the youngest was fondest of him of all the three.

After a while Halvor grew strange and dull and silent. Then the princesses asked him what he lacked, and if he didn't want to live with them any longer. Yes, he did, for they had enough and to spare, and he was well off in every way; but still, somehow or other, he did so long to go home, for his father and mother were alive, and he had such a great wish to see them.

Well, the princesses thought that might easily be managed.

"You shall go thither and come back hither, safe and unscathed, if you will only follow our advice," said the princesses.

Yes, he would be sure to mind all they said. So they dressed him up till he was as grand as a king's son, and set a ring on his finger. It was such a wonderful ring he could wish himself thither and hither with it; but they told him to be sure not to take it off, and not to name their names, for there would be an end of all his bravery, and then he would never see them more.

"If I only stood at home, I'd be glad," said Halvor, and it was done, as he had wished. There stood Halvor at his father's cottage door before he knew a word about it. Now,

it was about dusk at even, and so, when they saw such a grand, stately lord walk in, the old couple grew so afraid they began to bow and scrape.

Then Halvor asked if he couldn't stay there for the night.

"We cannot do it at all," they said, "for we haven't this thing or that thing which such a lord is used to having. 'Twere best your lordship went up to the farm, no long way off, for you can see the chimneys, and there they have lots of everything."

Halvor would not hear of it; he wanted to stop; but the old couple stuck to their opinion—that he had better go to the farmer's; there he would get both meat and drink. As for them, they hadn't even a chair to offer him to sit down on.

"No," said Halvor, "I will not go up there till to-morrow morning; let me just stay here to-night. If the worst comes to the worst, I can sit in the chimney-corner."

Well, they couldn't say anything against that, so Halvor sat down by the ingle, and began to poke about in the ashes, just as he used to do when he was at home in the old days, and stretched his lazy bones.

They chattered and talked about many things, so Halvor asked them if they had ever had any children.

"Yes, we had one lad, whose name was Halvor, but we do not know where he has wandered, and cannot even tell whether he is dead or alive."

"Couldn't it be me, now?" said Halvor.

"Let me see. I could tell him well enough," said the old wife, and rose up. "Our Halvor was so lazy and dull he never did a thing; and besides, he was so ragged that one tatter took hold of the next tatter on him. No, there never was the making of such a fine fellow in him as you are, master."

A little while after, the old wife went to the hearth to poke up the fire, and when the blaze fell on Halvor's face, just as when he was at home of old poking about in the ashes, she knew him at once.

"Ah! but it is you, then, after all, Halvor?" she cried, and then there was such joy for the old couple there was no end to it.

He was forced to tell how he had fared, and the old dame was so fond and proud of him, nothing would do but he must go up at once to the farmer's and show himself to the lassies, who had always looked down upon him.

Off she went, and Halvor followed. When she reached there, she told them all how Halvor had fared while away, and how he had come home again.

"Now you shall just see how real grand he is. He looks like nothing but a king's son."

"All very fine," said the lassies, and tossed up their heads. "We'll be bound he is just the same beggarly, ragged boy he always was."

Just then in walked Halvor, and the lassies were so taken aback they hardly knew what to do. They were so shame-faced they scarce dared look at Halvor, toward whom they had always been proud and haughty.

"Aye, aye," said Halvor, "you always thought yourselves so pretty and neat no one could come near you; but now, you should just see the eldest princess I have set free. Against her you look like milkmaids, and the midmost is prettier still, while the youngest, who is my sweetheart, is fairer than both sun and moon. I wish to goodness she were only here; then you would see what you would see!"

He had scarce uttered the words before there they stood; but then he felt so sorry, for he remembered what they had told him.

At the farm there was a great feast got ready for the princesses, and much was made of them, but they would not stop there.

"No, we want to go down to your father and mother," they said to Halvor, "so we will make a start."

He went down with them, and they came to a great lake just outside the farm. Close by the water there was such a lovely green bank; here the princesses said they would sit

and rest a little—they thought it so sweet to sit and look at the water.

They sat and chatted for a while, when the youngest princess said:

"I may as well comb your hair, Halvor."

So Halvor laid his head on her lap, and she combed his bonny locks, and it wasn't long before Halvor fell fast asleep. Then she took the ring from his finger and placed another in its stead, and said:

"Now hold me all together! and now, would we were all in Soria Moria Castle."

And as she spoke the words they were all whisked up into the air and carried far away through the blue sky.

When Halvor woke up he could see he had lost the princesses, and began to weep and wail, and became so downcast no one could comfort him. In spite of all his father and mother said, he wouldn't stop there, but took farewell of them, saying he was sure not to see them again; for if he could not find the princesses again, he thought it not worth while to live.

Well, he had still three hundred pounds left, so he set out on his way. When he had gone some distance he met a man with a horse and he wanted to buy it, and began to bargain with the man.

"Aye," said the man, "to tell the truth, I never thought of selling him; but if——"

"What do you want for him?" asked Halvor.

"I didn't give much for him, nor is he worth much; he is a brave horse to ride, but he cannot draw at all; still he's strong enough to carry you and your knapsack, turn and turn about," said the man.

At last they agreed on the price, and Halvor laid the knapsack on him, and walked a bit and rode a bit in turn. At last he came to a green plain where stood a great tree, at the roots of which he sat down. There he let the horse loose, and opened his knapsack and took a meal. At peep of day he set off again, for he could take no rest. So he rode and

walked and walked and rode the whole day. He didn't know at all where he was nor whither he was going, but he gave himself no time to rest, only when his horse cropped a bit of grass and he took a snack out of his knapsack when they came to one of those nice green glades.

At dusk the next day he saw a light gleaming away through the trees.

"Would there were folk over there," said Halvor, "that I might warm myself a bit and get a morsel to keep body and soul together."

When he got up to it he saw the light came from a wretched little hut, and through the window he saw an old couple inside. They were as gray-headed as a pair of doves, and the old wife had such a nose! why, it was so long she used it for a poker to stir the fire as she sat in the ingle.

"Good-evening," said Halvor.

"Good-evening," said the old wife.

"But what errand can you have in coming hither?" she went on, "for no Christian folk have been here these three hundred years or more."

Well, Halvor told her all about himself, and how he wanted to get to Soria Moria Castle, and asked if she knew the way.

"No," said the old wife, "that I don't; but see now, here comes the Moon. I'll ask her; she'll know all about it, for doesn't she shine on everything?"

So when the Moon stood clear and bright over the tree-tops, the old wife went out.

"THOU MOON, THOU MOON," she screamed, "canst thou tell me the way to Soria Moria Castle?"

"No," said the Moon, "that I cannot, for the last time I shone there a cloud stood before me."

"Wait a bit still," said the old wife to Halvor; "by and by comes the West Wind; he's sure to know it, for he puffs and blows round every corner."

"Nay, nay," said the old wife when she went out again, "you don't mean to say that you have got a horse, too! Just

turn the poor beast in our yard, and don't let him stand there and starve to death at the door."

Then she ran on:

"But won't you give him to me? Oh, I should like him. We have an old pair of boots here, with which you can take twenty miles at each stride; those you shall have for your horse, and so you will get all the sooner to Soria Moria Castle."

That Halvor was willing to do, and wanted to be off at once, but the old wife said there was no hurry.

"Lie down on the bench with you and sleep a bit, and I will watch and wake you when the West Wind comes."

So after a while up came the West Wind roaring and howling.

Out ran the old wife.

"THOU WEST WIND, THOU WEST WIND, canst thou tell me the way to Soria Moria Castle? Here's one who wants to get thither."

"Yes, I know it well," said the West Wind, "and now I'm just off thither to dry clothes for the wedding that's to be; if he is swift of foot he can go with me."

Out ran Halvor.

"You'll have to stretch your legs if you mean to keep up," said the West Wind.

So off he set over field and hedge, and hill and dale, and Halvor had hard work to keep up.

"Well," said the West Wind, "now I have no time to stay with you any longer, for I have got to go away yonder and tear up a strip of spruce wood first, before I go to the bleaching-ground to dry the clothes. If you go alongside the hill you'll come to a lot of lassies standing washing clothes, and then you'll not have far to go to Soria Moria Castle."

In a little while Halvor came upon the lassies who were washing, and they asked him if he had seen anything of the West Wind, who was to come and dry the clothes for the wedding.

"Aye, aye, that I have," said Halvor; "he's only gone to

tear up a strip of spruce wood," and then he asked them the way to Soria Moria Castle.

So they put him into the right way, and when he got to the castle it was full of folk and horses; so full it made one giddy to look at them. But Halvor was so torn and ragged from following the West Wind through bush and brier and bog, that he kept on one side, and wouldn't show himself until the last day when the bridal feast was to be.

So when all, as was then right and fitting, were to drink the bride and bridegroom's health and wish them luck, and when the cup-bearer was to drink to them all again, both knights and squires, last of all he came to Halvor. He drank their health, but let the ring which the princess had put upon his finger fall into the glass, and bade the cup-bearer go and greet the bride and hand her the glass.

Then up rose the princess from the table.

"Who is most worthy to have one of us," she said: "he that has set us free, or he that here sits by me as bridegroom?"

Well, they all said there could be but one voice and will as to that; and when Halvor heard this, he wasn't long in throwing off his beggar's rags, and arraying himself as bridegroom.

"Aye, aye, here is the right one, after all," said the youngest princess as soon as she saw him; so she sent the other over to one of her sisters, and held her wedding with Halvor.

# *Mons Tro*

ONCE upon a time there were two poor people who lived in the country, and had a houseful of children. Then one day they had another little baby, a boy, and they wanted to have him christened, but they could not get any one to be godfather; everybody they asked made some excuse, for everybody was afraid that, as the parents were so poor, the boy might become a burden upon the godfather. So the day came for the child to be taken to church, but as yet no godfather had been found for him.

Now it happened that on that very day an old beggar man came to the door and begged for a trifle, and they willingly gave him what they had to give. Then he, seeing there was something amiss, begged them to tell him their trouble. So they told him all about it, and then he offered to stand godfather to the child.

"You shall have no cause to regret it," said he.

In their distress they knew not what else to do, so they accepted his offer; and then they took the child to church, and the old beggar stood godfather. But they had forgotten to tell him what the child was to be called; so when the clergyman asked the name, the godfather answered:

"Mons Tro![1] I don't know."

But the clergyman only caught the words "Mons Tro," so he christened the boy by that name, and wrote it down afterward in the parish register Mogens Tro.

The parents were delighted with the name, and declared they could never have found a better. "For," said they, "now

[1] "Mons tro," an expression similar to "i'faith." "Mons" is also an abbreviation of the proper name "Mogens."

he has got both a surname and a Christian name." Then they took the old beggar home with them and regaled him with the best of all they had. Before bidding them good-by, he took a rusty little key out of his pocket and gave it to the father, saying:

"Take great care of this key till the boy is fourteen years old, and then give it to him. It is my christening present." Then he thanked them once more, and bade them farewell, and they never saw him again.

The boy grew and thrived in all respects. He became tall and strong, and was honest and truthful, too, so he caused his parents no anxiety, and did no dishonor to his name. The key was not taken much care of, though, for they gave it to the child to play with, and he threw it away and lost it. Many years after that, when he was grown big enough to help his father at his work, he was turning over a dirt-heap, and there he found a rusty key. He showed it to his mother, and she recognized it at once, so she told him it was the key that had been given to him as a christening present, and then she repeated what the old man had said to them about it. The boy put the key in his waistcoat-pocket, and from that day he looked upon it as his own property.

His fourteenth birthday was a day of wonders. When he and his father and mother got up in the morning they saw, standing right in front of their door, a pretty little house that had never stood there before, and the like of which they had never seen anywhere. It was built of wood, and carved in the most artistic manner from top to bottom. It was indeed a splendid house compared with the one they lived in. But it had no windows, and the only opening was a high door right up in the gable, and that was locked. The man and his wife both stood and stared; they could not make it out at all, and they could not conceive where the house came from, or how it got there. But Mons Tro said directly:

"This is my christening gift." So he pulled the rusty old key out of his pocket and tried it in the lock. Yes—it fitted; and he opened the door and walked in, and there stood the

prettiest little gray horse, all ready saddled, and on the wall hung a whole suit of beautiful new clothes. Mons Tro put them on, and found they fitted him like a skin. Then he mounted the horse; and there were the stirrups, too—they were exactly the right length for him. So he bade his father and mother farewell, and told them he was going out into the world to seek his fortune. So off he started at a gallop, and how that horse could gallop; it was like flying through the air, they went so fast!

After he had ridden some distance the horse said:

"If you get hungry, feel in my right ear; if you get thirsty, feel in my left ear."

"Well, I never!" said Tro. "Can you talk, my good horse? That *is* grand." And it was also a grand thing to have food and refreshment always at hand.

Well, on they went again, at a tremendous pace over hill and over dale, and they soon came to a wood where it was beautifully cool. The horse now only went at a walking pace, snorting and blowing after his hard gallop.

Tro spied something glittering lying on the road and found that it was a feather which shone like pure gold.

"I must have that," said he, and was about to dismount and pick it up.

"Nay," said the horse; "let it alone, or you will repent it."

So he let it alone, and rode on. Then he saw another feather lying in the road, that shone brighter than the first, and he wanted to pick it up; but the horse said:

"Let it alone, or you will repent it."

When they had gone a little farther there lay another feather, prettier even than the others. Tro could not bear to leave it there, so, although the horse said:

"If you follow my advice you will let it alone; if you do not you will repent it," he jumped down and picked up the feather; and after that he could not resist picking up a second, and then a third, of the same kind that lay in the road farther on. They were wonderful feathers; each one glittered like pure

gold, but when you held them all three together and looked at them, then you saw a picture—the picture of a most beautiful maiden. Tro could scarcely take his eyes off it. At last he hid the feathers carefully in his pocket, and rode on again at a flying pace till they came to the king's castle.

"You must stop here," said the horse, "and enter the king's service."

So Tro got off his horse, and went to the master of the horse and asked if he could not give him a place about the stables; he did not want any wages, only food for himself and his little gray horse. And so he took service there as a stable-boy. There was a great deal for him to see and to learn, and he took good care of the king's horses; but he did not forget to look after his own little horse. And so things went on very well for a while. Tro had his own room down by the stables, and in the evening, when he had finished his work, he used to go to his room, hang something up before the window, and then take out his three gold feathers. They shone like the sun, so that it was as light as day in the room, and from the midst of the feathers shone forth the picture of the beautiful maiden that Tro was never tired of looking at. There he sat, evening after evening, trying to copy the picture. It never seemed to him well enough done, so he began it over and over again, and each time it kept getting better and better.

Now, it was against the rules to burn a light in the stables; but although Tro covered up the window every evening most carefully, somebody found out that there was a light in the room and told the master of the horse, who at once went down to see about it. Yes; sure enough, there was a light in the stable-boy's room. But, as the master of the horse entered, Tro managed to hide away the feathers, and there was no longer any light to be seen; he had, however, no time to hide his drawing, so the man at once pounced upon it, and took it from him. The next morning he went to the king and complained of Tro. He had had a light in his room against the rules, the master of the horse said, and although they had been unable to discover the light, yet he had found Tro, sitting there draw-

ing pictures—"like this one," added he, showing it to the king.

The king wished to know the rights of the story, so Tro was summoned before him.

"What picture is this?" asked the king.

Well, it was one he had drawn himself.

"Have you any more of them?" asked the king.

Yes, he had. So he was obliged to go and fetch them. There were thirty-six of them, all alike, only the last was the best done.

"What did you copy it from?" asked the king; "and how can you draw in the dark? For you say you have never burned a light in the stables."

Then Tro was forced to confess everything, and even to produce the three feathers for the king to see.

The king stood for a long time gazing steadfastly at the feathers, and at the picture they contained. Then he asked whose likeness it was, and Tro said he did not know.

"Ah! you know more than you care to tell; and as you won't say, I will. That is the likeness of the most beautiful princess in all the world. I was to have married her when I was young, and now I am quite an old fellow. She belonged to me by right, for I killed her father, and took possession of his kingdom. But she managed to get away, and nobody has ever been able to find her. All whom I have sent to seek her have returned empty-handed. And I have never consented to marry any one else, for I wasn't going to throw myself away; and she was, as I have said, the loveliest princess in all the world, and so she still is undoubtedly. As you have her picture, of course you know where she is; and you shall bring her here to me, or your life shall pay the forfeit."

It was of no use for Tro to declare that he did not know where she was, and that he had found the feathers in the road. The king persisted: either he should promise to fetch the princess, or he should be hanged immediately.

"Well, I will try," said Tro. "That will give me a little respite, at any rate," thought he. He went down to the stables,

and lamented and bemoaned himself to his little gray horse. He was to go and fetch a princess, when he did not in the least know where she was!

"It serves you right," said the horse; "that is for the first feather you picked up. I told you then you would repent it. But, all the same, I will help you this once, though, for that matter, you will have to die some day."

So the horse told him all about the princess, whose likeness he had. It was quite true that she was still alive, and that she was still the loveliest princess in all the world, but she lived in a castle at the world's end. She had been changed into a bird with gleaming, golden feathers, and Tro had picked up some of those feathers. Now, if he was to go and find her, and fetch her here, he must first go to the king and demand a man-of-war fully equipped, for there was a wide sea to cross. And the ship was to be built entirely of mahogany, with copper bolts and copper sheathing, or she would never hold out for the long voyage.

Then Tro went to the king and demanded the ship, and the king promised that he should have it. The king did not possess such a ship, so he had to have it built, and that took some time. As soon as the ship was ready Tro went and told his little gray horse; and the little gray horse said:

"Go to the king again and demand a hundred barrels of beef, a hundred barrels of loaves made of wheaten flour, and a hundred barrels of worms. And you must also have a hundred wagons, each to carry two barrels, and two hundred ropes for the sailors who are to draw the hundred wagons, for part of your journey will be on land after you have sailed to the country that leads to the world's end."

Then Tro went to the king, who granted all his demands, and everything was brought on board the man-of-war. So then he went again to his little gray horse and told him that was done.

"Well, now give me a ton of hay, and take off my halter, and then do you go on board."

And Tro did as he was told; and just as the ship sailed out of harbor a white poodle sprang on board and lay down at

Tro's feet. And then he knew he should have his friend and helper with him on his travels.

The ship sped swiftly over the waves, and as the wind was always in their favor they soon came out into mid-ocean. Then, by the poodle's advice, Tro emptied the hundred barrels of worms into the water, as a present to all the fishes in the sea. And then the empty barrels were thrown overboard for the whales to play with. All the fishes assembled and feasted on the worms, and all the whales danced round the ship, and played ball with the barrels. And so they sailed on and on till they came to the world's end. There they landed, and they filled the hundred wagons with the hundred barrels of beef and the hundred barrels of wheaten loaves, and the two hundred sailors (the ship's crew) seized hold of the ropes that were made fast to the wagons, and so they journeyed on inland. First they came to an immense pack of wolves and bears, who were howling and growling and fighting and biting each other to pieces from sheer starvation. Tro gave them the hundred barrels of beef, and so they were very pleased to let him pass on. Next they came to a crowd of giants, who were fighting and battling over one loaf of bread, which they all wanted to have because they were so hungry. Tro gave them the hundred barrels of wheaten loaves, so they were very glad, and made room for him to pass with his dog and his ship's crew; and the giants all cried:

"Thank you! Here have we been fighting for a hundred years without getting one mouthful; and now, if ever you want us to help you, we will, of that you may be sure." Then Tro sent all the sailors back to the ship; but he and his dog journeyed on till they came in sight of a castle that shone like the sun.

"Now we must wait," said the dog, "till the right time comes. No one can get into the castle, except during three hours of the day, for there are so many poisonous serpents and adders round the castle, and they sleep only during the three hottest hours of the day, and only then can we get past them alive."

So when the right time was come, and all the serpents and adders were asleep, Tro slipped past them with the poodle, who told Tro what to do. All the gates and doors stood open, and Tro went into the castle, and out of one room into another, until he came to a room where a golden bird sat asleep upon a perch. It had feathers just like those Tro had found. Then Tro crept softly up and pulled out the longest feather from the bird's neck. So the bird awoke out of its sleep, and at the same moment it was changed into a most beautiful princess, exactly like the one in the picture that Tro knew so well.

"How did you manage to get past my dogs?" said she.

"I gave them as much meat as they could eat."

"How did you manage to get past my giants?" said she.

"I gave them as much bread as they wanted."

"How did you manage to get past my serpents and adders?" said she.

"I waited till the right time," answered Tro.

"What is your errand?" she then asked.

"I am come to fetch you home to a king who lives a long way off, and wishes to make you his queen; so you must come with me," said Tro.

"Yes—to-morrow," said she; "but now you must first sit down to table with me and have something to eat."

So they came to a room where there was a table set out with all kinds of dishes, and they took their places at it. But Tro would only eat of the dish at the top of the table, and would not touch anything else at all. His dog had told him that beforehand, and he was very careful not to disobey him in anything. Then the princess took Tro all over the castle, and showed him all its treasures; but there was no living thing to be seen in it, except the princess, who had been a bird. Then she showed him a splendid bedroom, with a great many ready-made beds in it, and told him he might sleep in one of them till the next morning, if he liked.

But Tro said:

"No; he and his dog would sleep under the castle gateway." And so they did.

Next day Tro went to the princess, and asked if she would go with him.

"No," said she; "first you must find me, and pick me out of the skeins of silk lying there." And with that she vanished, and in her place lay a large packet of silks of every color.

Tro knew what to do, for the dog had told him. He looked for one skein of silk that was a shade darker than any of the others, and when he had found it, he drew it from the packet, took out his knife, and pretended he was going to cut it in half.

In a moment the princess stood again at his side, and begged him to stop. And that was because her life was in that skein of silk.

After that Tro sat down again to dinner with her; but this time he would only eat of the dish at the bottom of the table, and he left all the other dishes untouched. Then she told him again he might sleep in one of the ready-made beds, but Tro slept under the castle gateway with his dog.

On the third day the princess refused to go with him till he should have found her in a truss of straw. She was hidden in one straw that was a shade lighter than the other. Tro found it, and again pretended he was going to cut it in half, when the princess stood once more beside him and begged him to stop, for now she would go with him. First she went all over the castle, locked all the doors and took the keys with her, and last of all she locked the castle gate, and took that key with her. That was a heavy bunch of keys she had to carry. Then she left the castle with Tro. And all the way down to the sea-shore the princess walked, carrying the keys with her. Then they went on board, and the sails were spread, and the wind was in their favor all the way home, as it had been all the way out.

When they were in the mid-ocean the princess seized her opportunity and threw the keys overboard into the sea. But the poodle saw her do it, and told Tro, who called all the fishes and begged them to look for the keys. And the fishes remembered the feast he had given them, and they all set about seeking for them, little and big. But for a long time no keys were to be found, for the sea is wide and deep, and there are hills

and dales and caves and caverns down in its depths. And the poor fishes hurt their scales so much, hunting about for the keys, that they cried till their eyes were red, and that is why they all have red eyes to this day.

But at last an old lobster came with a bunch of keys she had found stuck between two stones, and stuck so fast that the lobster had broken one of its claws in getting it loose, and that is why the lobster now has one long and one short claw. So Tro took the keys and hid them away without the princess knowing anything about it.

At last they reached the land where the old king lived; and the king was delighted with the princess, who looked as young and as lovely as ever, and he wanted to be married directly. But she said "No"; that was not to be thought of until she could have her own castle, with all its treasures, placed side by side with the king's palace. This was the condition, and until that was fulfilled there would be no wedding.

The king sent directly for Tro, and told him that he had done very well so far: he had brought the princess back with him; but still, that was not of the slightest use, as she had not her own castle with her. Why had he not brought it with him? He must promise to do that, or his life should pay the forfeit.

This put Tro into a great state of mind, so he went down to the stables, where his little gray horse was once more established, and bitterly bewailed his fate. He might as well die at once, he said, for it was impossible he should ever accomplish that; and since the beautiful princess was to be married to the old king, he did not even want to live any longer.

"Ah! this is for the second feather you picked up," said the horse. "Did I not tell you you would repent it? Still, for this once I will help you, though you will have to die some day all the same. Go to the king and demand a new ship, just like the first, with just as large a crew and just the same cargo."

Tro did so, and he had everything given to him as before, and, in short, everything happened over again. The poodle went with him, the fishes had the hundred barrels of worms,

and the whales had the empty barrels to play with. Tro got to the world's end; the bears and the wolves had the hundred barrels of beef, and the giants had the hundred barrels of wheaten loaves. And when he came to the castle that shone like the sun, all the giants came and lifted it up, and carried it down to the sea-shore, where all the whales had assembled themselves together, and they bore it on their broad backs over the wide ocean, and shot it up right inland, until it stood close to the king's castle. Then it was announced to the princess that her castle was come, and so now the wedding could take place. But she said it was not of the slightest use having the castle there, as she had no keys—she had lost them on the journey.

At first the king was of opinion that that was of no consequence—there were plenty of locksmiths in the land. But although they called together all the locksmiths, there was not one of them who could make a key or a picklock that would open one of the doors. So the king called Tro, and again threatened him with death if he did not contrive to get the keys.

This time Tro did not take it so much to heart; he had the bunch of keys, and he brought them straightaway to the princess. So now there was nothing to stand in the way of the wedding.

"Yes, there was," the princess said, for there were still two things she must have before the wedding could take place—a bottle of the water of life and a bottle of the water of death. She must have them first; and surely he who had done all the other things could do this—the king had only to command him to do it.

So Tro was sent for again, and the king told him that all he had done hitherto was of no use at all, unless he could now procure him a bottle of the water of life and a bottle of the water of death. That he should, and must manage to get, and very quickly, too, or he should end his life upon the gallows.

Then Tro went down to the stables again, and told his little gray horse what the king had ordered him to do now. And he didn't care to live any longer, he said; he only wanted to bid

his little horse good-by, and then they might come and hang him as soon as they pleased.

"Ah!" said the horse, "this is for the third feather you picked up in the road. I told you then you would repent it. But all the same I will try to get you out of this scrape, though, for that matter, you will have to die some day. Just go to the king and ask for two silver flasks; one must be labeled 'The water of life,' and the other must be labeled 'The water of death.' Then you must saddle me, and ride away from here."

Tro procured the two flasks, and he mounted his little gray horse and rode away. As he rode out of the castle yard the princess was standing at the window, and when she saw the little gray horse, she said:

"Ah! with such a helper as that you will surely be able to do it."

Tro went riding on, over hill and dale, just where the horse chose to take him, and at last they came to a strange land. Then they came to a thick wood, and the horse stopped, and told Tro to get down and go to a tree near by, where there was a raven's nest. He was to wait till the old raven left the nest, and then he was to climb the tree, take one of the young birds, kill it, and put it back into the nest, and the flask which was labeled "The water of life" he was to put in the nest with it. Tro did exactly what the horse had told him; and then he waited close by, and kept an eye upon the raven's nest. So the old raven came back and found the young one dead, and then he took the flask and flew away. A little while after he came back with the flask, and sprinkled a few drops from it over the dead bird, and in a moment it was alive again. Then Tro ran and frightened the old raven off the nest, climbed up the tree, and took the flask, which was half full, and came back to the horse, who told him that he must now go and find and catch an adder. He must throw something over its head so that it could not bite him, but he must not injure it in any way. Then he must climb up into the tree again, and tie the adder fast to the raven's nest. Then he must put the flask labeled "The water of death" into the nest. Tro did so; and then he saw the

raven come back to the nest, take the flask, and fly away with it; and after some little time the raven came flying back again with the flask, and he sprinkled some of the water over the adder, and in a moment it was dead. Tro made haste to climb the tree, and found the flask was still nearly full.

The princess had now got the two kinds of water that she had wished for, and so she made no further hindrance to the marriage, but merely said she must now find out if the water was of the right kind. The king considered this most reasonable, but neither he nor any one else had any wish to try it upon themselves.

"Let him who brought it come; he ought to be responsible for it," said the king.

And so Tro was fetched up to the castle. And the princess sprinkled him with the water of death, and immediately he fell down, as cold and as stiff as a corpse. But then she sprinkled him with the water of life, and in an instant Tro rose up, full of life, and he had become as handsome a man as you could see, much handsomer than he was before.

Now, the old king thought it would be a fine thing to become so young and so handsome, so he begged the princess to do the same with him as she had done with Tro. The princess was quite willing; so the king was sprinkled first with the water of death and then with the water of life, and he became much handsomer and younger than he had been for a very long time. But he was not quite satisfied; he felt sure he should become handsomer still if he went through the ceremony again.

"As you please," said the princess; and she sprinkled the king with the water of death, and then she said there was no more of the water of life left. "So let what is dead be dead," said the princess; and then she continued: "Now, is not the man who has done all these things, which no other man could do, who brought me from the world's end, and my castle, too, and my keys from the bottom of the sea, and who fetched me the water of life and the water of death—is not such a man as that the best fitted to be king in the land?"

And they all agreed with her, and, indeed, nobody cared to

contradict her, for there was still some water of death left in the flask. So they proclaimed Tro king of all the land, and the princess, the loveliest and the cleverest in all the world, became his bride, and they were both very happy.

On the wedding-day Tro went alone into the stable to his little gray horse, for he had him to thank for everything. So the horse said to him:

"Now, as I helped you so well, you must do me a service. Take a sword, and cut my head off, and lay it down close to my neck, and bless it three times."

"No, my good horse," said Tro; "that I cannot possibly do."

"You must, and you shall," said the horse; "it is for my good."

So Tro was forced to obey, and he took his sword and cut off the horse's head, and laid it down close to the neck, and he blessed it three times, and in an instant there stood before him a handsome young prince. He was the queen's brother, who had, like herself, been enchanted. And so now they went into the castle, Tro and the prince, and there were rejoicings, the like of which were never seen before, and the wedding festivities lasted fourteen days and fifteen nights. And Tro, and the queen and her brother, are alive and happy to this day.

# *The Emerald Book*

THERE was once upon a time a very, very old lady, who dwelt with her flock of geese in a waste place between two hills, where she had a small cottage. The common was surrounded by a large forest, into which this old woman hobbled every morning on crutches. There she was very active, more than one could have believed considering her great age, in collecting grass for her geese; she gathered also all the wild fruit she could reach, and carried it home on her back. One would have thought so heavy a burden would have bowed her down to the ground, but she always reached home safe and sound. If any one met her, she greeted him kindly, and would say: "Good day to you, my dear countryman; what beautiful weather it is! Ah! you wonder how I get over the ground, but every one must bear his own burden!" People at last, however, grew afraid to meet her, and took a bypath; and if a father passed near with his children, he would say to them: "Take care of that old woman; she has mischief behind her ears; she is a witch."

One morning a lively young fellow passed through the wood. The sun was shining brightly, the birds were singing, and a gentle breeze was blowing among the trees and made everything seem gay and pleasant. Still he had met nobody, till he suddenly perceived the old woman kneeling on the ground, and cutting grass with a sickle. She had already placed a large heap in her handkerchief, and by her side stood two baskets filled with apples and wild berries. "Ah! my good woman," exclaimed the youth, "how will you carry all that?" "I must carry it, my good master," she replied, "but rich people's children do not want to do such things. Will

you not help me?" she continued, as the youth remained by her; "you have a straight back yet, and young legs; it will be easy for you. My house is not far from here; it stands on the common beyond yon hill. How soon your legs could jump there!"

The youth took compassion on the old woman, and replied to her: "Certainly; my father is no peasant, but a rich count; still that you may see it is not only the peasants who carry burdens, I will take your bundle."

"If you will try it," said the old woman, "I shall be much obliged to you; but there are the apples and berries which you must carry too. It is but an hour's walk which you will have to take, but it will seem much less to you."

The youth became a little thoughtful when he heard of an hour's journey, but the old woman now would not let him off, but packed the handkerchief of grass on his back, and hung the two baskets on his arms. "See you, how light it is," she said. "No, it is not at all light," answered the young count, making a rueful face; "the bundle weighs heavily as if it were full of big stones, and the apples and berries seem like lead; I can scarcely breathe."

So saying he would have liked to lay the bundle down again, but the old woman would not permit it. "Just see," cried she in scorn, "the young lord cannot convey what an old woman like me has so often borne. You people are very ready with your fair words, but when it comes to working, you are equally ready with your excuses. Why do you stand trembling there?" she continued. "Come, pick up your legs; nobody will take your bundle off again."

Now so long as the young count walked on level ground, he managed pretty well, but when he came to the hill and began to ascend it, and the stones rolled under his feet as if they were alive, his strength began to fail. Drops of sweat stood upon his brow, and ran down his back, now hot and now cold. "My good woman," he exclaimed, "I can go no farther till I have rested a while." "Not here, not here," answered the old woman; "when we arrive at our destination you can rest,

but now we must keep on; who knows what good it may do you!"

"You are shameless, you old woman!" cried the youth, trying to throw away the bundle, but he wearied himself in vain; it stuck as fast to his back as if it had grown there. He turned and twisted himself, but with no effect; he could not get rid of the bundle, and the old woman only laughed at his exertions, and danced around him on her crutches. "Don't put yourself in a passion, my dear lord," she said; "you are getting as red in the face as a turkey-cock. Bear your burden patiently; when we arrive at home, I will give you a good draught to refresh you." What could he do? He was obliged to bear his fate and follow patiently behind the old woman, who appeared to become more and more active as his burden grew heavier. All at once she made a spring and jumped on the top of the bundle, where she sat down; and thin and withered as she was, her weight was yet more than that of the stoutest farm-servant. The youth's knees trembled and shook, but if he did not keep onward, the old woman beat him with a strap and stinging nettles about the legs. Under this continual goading, he at last ascended the hill, and arrived at the old woman's cottage just when he was ready to drop. As soon as the geese perceived the old woman they stretched out their wings and their necks and ran toward her crying, "Hiss! hiss!" Behind the flock walked a middle-aged woman with a stick in her hand, who was big and strong, but as ugly as night. "My mother," said she to the old woman, "has something happened that you have remained out so long?" "Never fear, my dear daughter," replied the old woman; "nothing evil has met me, but in fact the young count there has carried my bundle for me: only think, when I was tired, he took me also on his back! The road has not been too long either, for we have been merry, and made jokes on each other." At length the old woman ceased talking, and took the bundle off the youth's back and the baskets from his arms, and then looking at him cheerfully she said to him: "Sit down on the bench by

the door and rest yourself; you have honestly earned your reward, and it shall not be overlooked." And turning to the goose-girl she continued: "Go into the house, my daughter; it is not correct that you should be alone with this young man; one ought not to pour oil on the fire, and he might fall in love with you."

The young count did not know whether to laugh or cry. "Such a treasure!" he thought to himself. "Why, even if she were thirty years younger, my heart would not be touched!" Meanwhile the old woman caressed and stroked her geese, as if they were children, and at last went into the house with her daughter. The youth stretched himself on the bench beneath an apple-tree, where the breeze blew softly and gently; while around him was spread a green meadow, covered with primroses, wild thyme, and a thousand other flowers. In the middle of it flowed a clear stream, on which the sun shone; and the white geese kept passing up and down or paddling in the water. "It is quite lovely here," he said to himself; "but I am so tired that I cannot keep my eyes open; so I will sleep awhile, provided that no wind comes and blows away my legs from my body, for they are as tender as tinder!"

After he had slept some time, the old woman came and shook him till he awoke. "Stand up," she said; "you cannot stop here. Certainly I did treat you rather shabbily, but it has not cost you your life. Now I will give you your reward; it will be neither money nor property, but something better." With these words she placed in his hands a small book, cut out of a single emerald, saying: "Keep it well, and it will bring you good luck."

The count thereupon jumped up and felt himself quite strong and refreshed; so he thanked the old woman for her present, and set off on his journey, without once looking back for the beautiful daughter. And when he had walked a considerable way he could still hear the loud cackling of the geese in the distance.

The young count had to wander three days in the wilder-

ness before he could find his way out, and then he came to a large city, where, because nobody knew him, he was led to the royal palace, where the king and queen sat on their thrones. There the count sank on one knee, and drawing forth the emerald book, laid it at the feet of the queen. She bade him arise and hand the book to her; but scarcely had she opened it and looked at its contents than she fell as if dead upon the ground. Thereupon the count was seized by the king's servants, and would have been led off to prison had not the queen soon opened her eyes and begged him to be set at liberty, for she must speak with him privately, and therefore every one must leave the room.

As soon as the queen was left alone, she began to weep bitterly, and to say: "What avails all this honor and pageantry which surrounds me, when every morning I give way to grief and sorrow! I once had three daughters, the youngest of whom was so beautiful that all the world thought her a wonder. She was as white as snow, as red as the bloom of an apple, and her hair was like the shining of a sunbeam. If she cried, her tears were like pearls and gems falling from her eyes. When she was fifteen, her father caused her and her sisters to come before his throne; and you should have seen how the people opened their eyes when she came in, for it was like the appearance of the sun. The king then said to them: 'My daughters, I know not when my last day will arrive, and therefore to-day I will appoint what each shall do at my death. You all love me, but the one who loves me best shall have the best portion.' They each of them said they loved him best; and the king then asked them whether they could not express in words how much they loved him, and then he would be able to judge. So the eldest said she loved him as the sweetest sugar; the second that she loved her father as her smartest dress; but the youngest was silent. 'My dear child, how do you love me?' asked the king. 'I know not,' she replied; 'and I can compare my love with nothing.' Her father, however, pressed her to say something, and at length she said: 'The most delicate food is tasteless to

me without salt, and therefore I love you, father, like salt.' At this reply the king became very angry, and exclaimed. 'If you love me like salt you shall be rewarded with salt.' Thereupon he divided the kingdom between the two eldest daughters; but he caused a sack of salt to be bound on the shoulders of his youngest child, and two slaves were ordered to lead her into the wild forest. We all wept and prayed for her to the king, but his anger was not to be turned away. How she wept when she left us, so that the whole path was strewn with the pearls which fell from her eyes! However, afterward, the king did repent of his great harshness, and caused a search to be made in the forest for the poor child, but without success. And now, when I think how, perhaps, the wild beasts devoured her, I know not what to do for grief; but many a time I try to comfort myself with the idea that happily she is living still, concealed in some cave, or under the hospitable protection of some one who found her. But imagine my feelings when, on opening your emerald book, I saw lying therein a pearl of the same kind as used to drop from my daughter's eyes, and then you may also conceive how my heart was moved at the sight. But now you shall tell me how you came by the pearl."

The young count then told the queen that he had received it from an old woman, living in a wood which seemed to be haunted, and who appeared to be a witch; but of the queen's child he had neither seen nor heard anything. The king and queen came to the resolution to seek out this old woman, for they thought where the pearl had been, there they should also obtain news of their daughter.

The old woman sat in her house in the wilderness, spinning at her wheel. It was dark already, and a faggot, which burnt on the hearth below, gave a feeble light. All at once there was a noise outside; the geese were coming home from the meadow, and they cackled with all their might. Soon afterward the daughter stepped in, but the old woman scarcely thanked her, and only shook her head. The daughter sat down, and taking her wheel spun the thread as quickly as a

young girl. Thus they sat for two hours, without speaking to one another, till at length something rattled at the window, and two fiery eyes glared in from the outside; it was an old night-owl, which screeched thrice; and then the old woman, looking up from her work, said, "Now is the time, my daughter, for you to go out and do your work."

The daughter got up and went away over the meadows deep into a valley beyond. By and by she came to a brook near which stood three oak-trees; and at the same time the moon arose round and full above the mountain, and shone so brightly that one might have picked up a needle by its light. She drew off the mask which covered her face, and then bathing in the brook began to wash herself. As soon as she had done that, she dipped the mask also in the water, and then laid it again on the meadow to dry and bleach in the moonshine. But how was the maiden changed! so much you could never have fancied. Her golden hair fell down like sunbeams, and when she removed the cap which confined it, it covered her whole form. Only her eyes could be seen peeping through the tresses like the stars in heaven, and her cheeks blooming like the soft red of the apple-blossoms.

But the fair maiden was nevertheless sad; and she sat down and wept bitterly. One tear after another flowed from her eyes, and rolled to the ground between her locks; and thus sitting she would have remained for a long time had she not been disturbed by a rustling noise in the branches of one of the trees. She jumped up and sprang away like a fawn disturbed by the gun of the hunter; and at the same moment a black cloud obscured the moon, under cover of which the maiden slipped on her old mask and disappeared like a light blown out by the wind. She ran home trembling like an aspen-leaf, and found the old woman standing before the door: but when she was about to relate what had happened to her, the old woman laughed, and said she knew already all about it. The old mother then led the maiden into the room and lighted a fresh faggot; but instead of sitting down to her wheel, she fetched a broom and began to sweep and

dust. "It must all be clean and respectable," said she to the maiden. "But, mother," replied she, "why do you begin at this late hour? what is the matter?"

"Do you then know what hour it is?" inquired the old mother.

"Not quite midnight, but past eleven," returned the daughter.

"Do you not remember, then," continued the old woman, "that to-day you have been with me three years? Your time is now expired; we can remain together no longer!"

"Alas! dear mother, you will not drive me out," said the maiden in an alarmed tone; "where shall I go? I have neither home nor friends, and whither could I turn? I have ever done all you desired, and you have been satisfied with me; send me not away!" The old woman would not, however, tell the maiden what was coming, but said instead: "My dwelling is no longer here, but since the house and this room must be clean when I leave, hinder me not in my work, and cease to care on your own account; you shall find a roof under which to dwell, and with the reward which I shall give you, you will also be contented."

"But do tell me what is coming," entreated the maiden.

"I tell you a second time, do not disturb me in my work. Speak not a word more, but go into your own room and pull off the mask from your face, and put on the beautiful dress which you wore when you came to me, and then remain where you are till I call you."

And now I must tell you what befell the king and queen, who were preparing, when we last heard of them, to go in search of the old woman in the wilderness. The count was, first of all, despatched by night to the forest alone, and for two days he wandered before he found the right road. Along this he went till darkness overtook him, and then he climbed a tree to pass the night, for he feared he might lose his way in the dark. As soon as the moon rose he perceived a figure coming across the mountain, and although she had no rod in

her hand, he could not doubt that it was the goose-girl whom he had seen before at home with the old woman, "Oho!" he exclaimed to himself; "here comes one witch, and when I have got her, I will soon catch the other!" But how astonished he was when, on stepping up to the brook, she laid aside her mask, and washed herself, and he saw her golden hair fall down and cover her whole figure, and render her more beautiful than any one he had ever before seen! He scarcely ventured to breathe, but he stretched out his neck as far as he could from the foliage and looked at her with fixed eyes. Unfortunately, he bent over too far, and the bough cracked beneath his weight; and at the same instant the maiden disappeared, favored by a dark cloud, and when the moon appeared again she was out of sight.

The young count, however, made haste down from the tree and pursued the maiden with rapid strides; but before he had gone very far he perceived two figures wandering over the meadows in the twilight. They were the king and queen, who had perceived at a distance the light in the old woman's cottage and were hastening toward it. The count told them what marvelous things he had witnessed by the brook, and they felt no doubt that he had seen their lost daughter. Full of joy they journeyed on till they came to the cottage, around which lay the geese, with their heads under their wings, and none stirred at their approach. The three peeped in at the window and saw the old woman spinning silently, without raising her eyes from her work, but simply nodding her head now and then. The room was as perfectly clean as if it had been inhabited by the Cloud-Men, who carry no dust on their feet; and for some minutes they observed the whole scene in silence; but at last plucking up courage they knocked at the window lightly. Thereupon the old woman got up, and looking at them kindly as if she had expected them, called out, "Come in; I know who you are."

As soon as the king, queen, and count had entered the room, the old woman said: "You might have spared yourselves this long journey if you had not driven out, for three

long years in the forest, your child who was so affectionate and so beautiful. She has come to no harm, and for these three years past she has tended my geese; neither has she learned any evil, but kept her heart pure and spotless. But you have been righteously punished by the sorrow and trouble which you have suffered." With these words she went to the chamber door and called to the daughter to come out, and as soon as the princess made her appearance, dressed in her silk gown, with her golden hair and bright eyes, it seemed like the entrance of an angel into the room.

She went up to her father and mother and fell on their necks and kissed them, which made them both cry with joy. But when she perceived the young count standing by them, she blushed as red as a moss-rose without knowing wherefore.

"My dear child," said the king to her, "what shall I give you, for I have parted my kingdom already?"

"She needs nothing," said the old woman, "for I present her with the tears which she has wept, which are in reality pearls more beautiful than any that can be found in the sea, and of more value than your entire kingdom. And for a further reward for her services to me I give her this house." As soon as the old woman had said these words she disappeared, and immediately, after a little knocking at the walls, the house became a noble palace, and the room in which they stood a hall, in the midst of which a princely table was set out, with many servants hastening to and fro.

The story ends here, for my grandmother, who related it to me, had partly lost her memory, and so she had forgotten its conclusion. I believe, however, that the beautiful princess was married to the young count, and that they remained in the palace, and lived happily so long as God suffered them to remain on earth. But whether the snow-white geese whom the princess had tended were really men (nobody needs to be offended), whom the old woman had taken to herself, and then restored to their natural form to wait as servants upon the young queen, I cannot say, though I suspect it was so. This much is certain, that the old woman was no witch, as

people believed, but a wise woman, who had good intentions. Apparently, too, it was she who, at the birth of the princess, had endowed her with the power to weep pearls instead of tears.

At this day, however, that does not happen, else would the poor soon become rich.

# *The Matsuyama Mirror*

ALONG, long time ago, there lived in a quiet spot a young man and his wife. They had one child, a little daughter, whom they both loved with all their hearts. I cannot tell you their names, for they have been long since forgotten, but the name of the place where they lived was Matsuyama, in the province of Echigo.

It happened once, while the little girl was still a baby, that the father was obliged to go to the great city, the capital of Japan, upon some business. It was too far for the mother and her little baby to go, so he set out alone, after bidding them good-by, and promising to bring them home some pretty present.

The mother had never been farther from home than the next village, and she could not help being a little frightened at the thought of her husband taking such a long journey, and yet she was a little proud too, for he was the first man in all that country-side who had been to the big town where the king and his great lords lived, and where there were so many beautiful and curious things to be seen.

At last the time came when she might expect her husband back, so she dressed the baby in its best clothes, and herself put on a pretty blue dress which she knew her husband liked.

You may fancy how glad this good wife was to see him come home safe and sound, and how the little girl clapped her hands, and laughed with delight, when she saw the pretty toys her father had brought for her. He had much to tell of all the wonderful things he had seen upon the journey, and in the town itself.

"I have brought you a very pretty thing," said he to his

wife; "it is called a mirror. Look and tell me what you see inside." He gave to her a plain, white wooden box, in which, when she had opened it, she found a round piece of metal. One side was white like frosted silver, and ornamented with raised figures of birds and flowers, the other was bright as the clearest crystal. Into it the young mother looked with delight and astonishment, for from its depths was looking at her with parted lips and bright eyes, a smiling, happy face.

"What do you see?" again asked the husband, pleased at her astonishment, and glad to show that he had learned something while he had been away. "I see a pretty woman looking at me, and she moves her lips as if she was speaking, and —dear me, how odd, she has on a blue dress just like mine!" "Why, you silly woman, it is your own face that you see," said the husband, proud of knowing something that his wife didn't know. "That round piece of metal is called a mirror; in the town everybody has one, although we have not seen them in this country place before."

The wife was charmed with her present, and for a few days could not look into the mirror often enough, for you must remember that, as this was the first time she had seen a mirror, so, of course, it was the first time she had ever seen the reflection of her own pretty face. But she considered such a wonderful thing far too precious for every-day use, and soon shut it up in its box again, and put it away carefully among her most valued treasures.

Years passed on, and the husband and wife still lived happily. The joy of their life was their little daughter, who grew up the very image of her mother, and who was so dutiful and affectionate that everybody loved her. Mindful of her own little passing vanity on finding herself so lovely, the mother kept the mirror carefully hidden away, fearing that the use of it might breed a spirit of pride in her little girl.

She never spoke of it, and as for the father, he had forgotten all about it. So it happened that the daughter grew up as simple as the mother had been, and knew nothing of her

own good looks, or of the mirror which would have reflected them.

But by and by a terrible misfortune happened to this happy little family. The good, kind mother fell sick; and, although her daughter waited upon her day and night, with loving care, she grew worse and worse, until at last there was no hope but that she must die.

When she found that she must so soon leave her husband and child, the poor woman felt very sorrowful, grieving for those she was going to leave behind, and most of all for her little daughter.

She called the girl to her and said: "My darling child, you know that I am very ill; soon I must die, and leave your dear father and you alone. When I am gone, promise me that you will look into this mirror every night and every morning; there you will see me, and know that I am still watching over you." With these words she took the mirror from its hiding-place and gave it to her daughter. The child promised, with many tears, and so the mother, seeming now calm and resigned, died a short time after.

Now, this obedient and dutiful daughter never forgot her mother's last request, but each morning and evening took the mirror from its hiding-place, and looked in it long and earnestly. There she saw the bright and smiling vision of her lost mother, not pale and sickly as in her last days, but the beautiful young mother of long ago. To her at night she told the story of the trials and difficulties of the day, to her in the morning she looked for sympathy and encouragement in whatever might be in store for her.

So day by day she lived as in her mother's sight, striving still to please her as she had done in her lifetime, and careful always to avoid whatever she once disapproved.

Her greatest joy was to be able to look in the mirror and say, "Mother, I have been to-day what you would have me to be."

Seeing her every night and morning, without fail, look into the mirror, and seem to hold converse with it, her father at

length asked her the reason of her strange behavior. "Father," she said, "I look in the mirror every day to see my dear mother and to talk with her." Then she told him of her mother's dying wish, and how she had never failed to fulfil it. Touched by so much simplicity, and such faithful, loving obedience, the father shed tears of pity and affection. Nor could he find it in his heart to tell the child that the image she saw in the mirror was but the reflection of her own sweet face, by constant sympathy and association, becoming more and more like her dead mother's day by day.

# *The Maiden Who Loved a Fish*

THERE was once among the Marshpees, a small tribe who have their hunting-grounds on the shores of the Great Lake, near the Cape of Storms, a woman whose name was Awashanks. She was rather silly and very idle. For days together she would sit doing nothing. Then she was so ugly and ill-shaped that not one of the youths of the village would have aught to say to her by way of courtship or marriage. She squinted very much; her face was long and thin, her nose excessively large and humped, her teeth crooked and projecting, her chin almost as sharp as the bill of a loon, and her ears as large as those of a deer. Altogether she was a very odd and strangely formed woman, and wherever she went she never failed to excite much laughter and derision among those who thought that ugliness and deformity were fit subjects for ridicule.

Though so very ugly, there was one faculty she possessed in a more remarkable degree than any woman of the tribe. It was that of singing. Nothing, unless such could be found in the land of spirits, could equal the sweetness of her voice or the beauty of her songs. Her favorite place of resort was a small hill, a little removed from the river of her people, and there, seated beneath the shady trees, she would while away the hours of summer with her charming songs. So beautiful and melodious were the things she uttered that, by the time she had sung a single sentence, the branches above her head would be filled with the birds that came thither to listen, the thickets around her would be crowded with beasts, and the waters rolling beside her would be alive with fishes, all attracted by the sweet sounds. From the minnow to the por-

poise, from the wren to the eagle, from the snail to the lobster, from the mouse to the mole—all hastened to the spot to listen to the charming songs of the hideous Marshpee maiden.

Among the fishes which repaired every night to the vicinity of the Little Hillock, which was the chosen resting-place of the ugly songstress, was the great chief of the trouts, a tribe of fish inhabiting the river near by. The chief was of a far greater size than the people of his nation usually are, being as long as a man and quite as broad.

Of all the creatures which came to listen to the singing of Awashanks none appeared to enjoy it so highly as the chief of the trouts. As his bulk prevented him from approaching so near as he wished, he, from time to time, in his eagerness to enjoy the music to the best advantage, ran his nose into the ground, and thus worked his way a considerable distance into the land. Nightly he continued his exertions to approach the source of the delightful sounds he heard, till at length he had plowed out a wide and handsome channel, and so effected his passage from the river to the hill, a distance extending an arrow's-flight. Thither he repaired every night at the commencement of darkness, sure to meet the maiden who had become so necessary to his happiness. Soon he began to speak of the pleasure he enjoyed, and to fill the ears of Awashanks with fond protestations of his love and affection. Instead of singing to him, she now began to listen to his voice. It was something so new and strange to her to hear the tones of love and courtship, a thing so unusual to be told she was beautiful, that it is not wonderful her head was turned by the new incident, and that she began to think the voice of her lover the sweetest she had ever heard. One thing marred their happiness. This was that the trout could not live upon land, nor the maiden in the water. This state of things gave them much sorrow.

They had met one evening at the usual place, and were discoursing together, lamenting that two who loved each other so, should be doomed always to live apart, when a man ap-

peared close to Awashanks. He asked the lovers why they seemed to be so sad.

The chief of the trouts told the stranger the cause of their sorrow.

"Be not grieved nor hopeless," said the stranger, when the chief had finished. "The impediments can be removed. I am the spirit who presides over fishes, and though I cannot make a man or woman of a fish, I can make them into fish. Under my power Awashanks shall become a beautiful trout."

With that he bade the girl follow him into the river. When they had waded in some little depth he took up some water in his hand and poured it on her head, muttering some words, of which none but himself knew the meaning. Immediately a change took place in her. Her body took the form of a fish, and in a few moments she was a complete trout. Having accomplished this transformation the spirit gave her to the chief of the trouts, and the pair glided off into the deep and quiet waters. She did not, however, forget the land of her birth. Every season, on the same night as that upon which her disappearance from her tribe had been wrought, there were to be seen two trouts of enormous size playing in the water off the shore. They continued their visits till the pale-faces came to the country, when, deeming themselves to be in danger from a people who paid no reverence to the spirits of the land, they bade it adieu forever.

# *The Journey to the Island of Souls*

ONCE upon a time there lived in the nation of the Chippewas a most beautiful maiden, the flower of the wilderness, the delight and wonder of all who saw her. She was called the Rock-rose, and was beloved by a youthful hunter, whose advances gained her affection. No one was like the brave Outalissa in her eyes: his deeds were the greatest, his skill was the most wonderful. It was not permitted them, however, to become the inhabitants of one lodge. Death came to the flower of the Chippewas. In the morning of her days she died, and her body was laid in the dust with the customary rites of burial. All mourned for her, but Outalissa was a changed man. No more did he find delight in the chase or on the war-path. He grew sad and shunned the society of his brethren. He stood motionless as a tree in the hour of calm, as the wave that is frozen up by the breath of the cold wind.

Joy came no more to him. He told his discontent in the ears of his people, and spoke of his determination to seek his beloved maiden. She had but removed, he said, as the birds fly away at the approach of winter, and it required but due diligence on his part to find her. Having prepared himself, as a hunter makes ready for a long journey, he armed himself with his war-spear and bow and arrow, and set out to the Land of Souls.

Directed by the old tradition of his fathers, he traveled south to reach that region, leaving behind him the great star. As he moved onward, he found a more pleasant region succeeding to that in which he had lived. Daily, hourly, he remarked the change. The ice grew thinner, the air warmer, the trees taller. Birds, such as he had never seen before, sang

in the bushes, and fowl of many kind were pluming themselves in the warm sun on the shores of the lake. The gay woodpecker was tapping the hollow beech, the swallow and the martin were skimming along the level of the green vales. He heard no more the cracking of branches beneath the weight of icicles and snow, he saw no more the spirits of departed men dancing wild dances on the skirts of the northern clouds, and the farther he traveled the milder grew the skies, the longer was the period of the sun's stay upon the earth, and the softer, though less brilliant, the light of the moon.

Noting these changes as he went with a joyful heart, for they were indications of his near approach to the land of joy and delight, he came at length to a cabin situated on the brow of a steep hill in the middle of a narrow road. At the door of this cabin stood a man of a most ancient and venerable appearance. He was bent nearly double with age. His locks were white as snow. His eyes were sunk very far into his head, and the flesh was wasted from his bones till they were like trees from which the bark has been peeled. He was clothed in a robe of white goat's skin, and a long staff supported his tottering limbs whithersoever he walked.

The Chippewa began to tell him who he was, and why he had come thither, but the aged man stopped him, telling him that he knew upon what errand he was bent.

"A short while before," said he, "there passed the soul of a tender and lovely maiden, well known to the son of the Red Elk, on her way to the beautiful island. She was fatigued with her long journey, and rested a while in this cabin. She told me the story of your love, and was persuaded that you would attempt to follow her to the Lake of Spirits."

The old man further told Outalissa that if he made speed he might hope to overtake the maiden on the way. Before, however, he resumed his journey he must leave behind him his body, his spear, bow, and arrows, which the old man promised to keep for him should he return. The Chippewa left his body and arms behind him, and under the direction of the old man entered upon the road to the Blissful Island. He

had traveled but a couple of bowshots when it met his view, even more beautiful than his fathers had painted it.

He stood upon the brow of a hill which sloped gently down to the water of a lake which stretched as far as eye could see. Upon its banks were groves of beautiful trees of all kinds, and many canoes were to be seen gliding over its waves. Afar, in the center of the lake, lay the beautiful island appointed for the residence of the good. He walked down to the shore and entered a canoe which stood ready for him, made of a shining white stone. Seizing the paddle, he pushed off from the shore and commenced to make his way to the island. As he did so, he came to a canoe like his own, in which he found her whom he was in pursuit of. She recognized him, and the two canoes glided side by side over the water. Then Outalissa knew that he was on the Water of Judgment, the great water over which every soul must pass to reach the beautiful island, or in which it must sink to meet the punishment of the wicked. The two lovers glided on in fear, for the water seemed at times ready to swallow them, and around them they could see many canoes going down, which held those whose lives had been wicked. The Master of Life had, however, decreed that they two should pass in safety, and they reached the shores of the beautiful island, on which they landed full of joy.

It is impossible to tell the delights with which they found it filled. Mild and soft winds, clear and sweet waters, cool and refreshing shades, perpetual verdure, inexhaustible fertility, met them on all sides. Gladly would the son of the Red Elk have remained forever with his beloved in the happy island, but the words of the Master of Life came to him in the pauses of the breeze, saying:

"Go back to thine own land, hunter. Thy time has not yet come. Thou hast not yet performed the work I have for thee to do, nor canst thou yet enjoy those pleasures which belong to those who have performed their allotted task on earth. Go back, then. In time thou shalt rejoin her, the love of whom has brought thee hither."

# *The Twelve Dancing Princesses*

ONCE upon a time there lived in a French village a little cow-boy, without either father or mother. His real name was Michael, but he was always called the Star Gazer, because when he drove his cows over the commons to seek for pasture, he went along with his head in the air, gaping at nothing. As he had a white skin, blue eyes, and hair that curled all over his head, the village girls used to cry after him, "Well, Star Gazer, what are you doing?" and Michael would answer, "Oh, nothing," and go on his way without even turning to look at them.

The fact was he thought them very ugly, with their sunburned necks, their great red hands, their coarse petticoats, and their wooden shoes. He had heard that somewhere in the world there were girls whose necks were white and whose hands were small, who were always dressed in the finest silks and laces, and were called princesses, and while his companions round the fire saw nothing in the flames but common every-day fancies, he dreamed that he had the happiness to marry a princess.

One morning about the middle of August, just at mid-day when the sun was hottest, Michael ate his dinner of a piece of dry bread, and went to sleep under an oak. And while he slept he dreamed that there appeared before him a beautiful lady, dressed in a robe of cloth of gold, who said to him: "Go to the castle of Belœil, and there you shall marry a princess."

That evening the little cow-boy, who had been thinking a great deal about the advice of the lady in the golden dress, told his dream to the farm people. But, as was natural, they only laughed at the Star Gazer.

The next day at the same hour he went to sleep again under the same tree. The lady appeared to him a second time, and said, "Go to the castle of Belœil, and you shall marry a princess."

In the evening Michael told his friends that he had dreamed the same dream again, but they only laughed at him more than before. "Never mind," he thought to himself; "if the lady appears to me a third time, I will do as she tells me."

The following day, to the great astonishment of all the village, about two o'clock in the afternoon a voice was heard singing:

"Raleô, raleô,
How the cattle go!"

It was the little cow-boy driving his herd back to the byre.

The farmer began to scold him furiously, but he answered quietly, "I am going away," made his clothes into a bundle, said good-by to all his friends, and boldly set out to seek his fortunes.

There was great excitement through all the village, and on the top of the hill the people stood holding their sides with laughing, as they watched the Star Gazer trudging bravely along the valley with his bundle at the end of his stick.

It was enough to make any one laugh certainly.

It was well known for full twenty miles round that there lived in the castle of Belœil twelve princesses of wonderful beauty, and as proud as they were beautiful, and who were besides so very sensitive and of such truly royal blood, that they would have felt at once the presence of a pea in their beds, even if the mattresses had been laid over it.

It was whispered about that they led exactly the lives that princesses ought to lead, sleeping far into the morning, and never getting up till mid-day. They had twelve beds all in the same room, but what was very extraordinary was the fact that though they were locked in by triple bolts, every morning their satin shoes were found worn into holes.

When they were asked what they had been doing all night,

they always answered that they had been asleep; and, indeed, no noise was ever heard in the room, yet the shoes could not wear themselves out alone!

At last the Duke of Belœil ordered the trumpet to be sounded, and a proclamation to be made that whoever could discover how his daughters wore out their shoes should choose one of them for his wife.

On hearing the proclamation a number of princes arrived at the castle to try their luck. They watched all night behind the open door of the princesses, but when the morning came the poor fellows had all disappeared, and no one could tell what had become of them.

When he reached the castle, Michael went straight to the gardener and offered his services. Now it happened that the garden boy had just been sent away, and though the Star Gazer did not look very sturdy, the gardener agreed to take him, as he thought that his pretty face and golden curls would please the princesses.

The first thing he was told was that when the princesses got up he was to present each one with a bouquet, and Michael thought that if he had nothing more unpleasant to do than that he should get on very well.

Accordingly he placed himself behind the door of the princesses' room, with the twelve bouquets in a basket. He gave one to each of the sisters; and they took them without even deigning to look at the lad, except Lina, the youngest, who fixed her large black eyes, as soft as velvet, on him, and exclaimed, "Oh, how pretty he is—our new flower boy!" The rest all burst out laughing, and the eldest pointed out that a princess ought never to lower herself by looking at a garden boy.

Now Michael knew quite well what had happened to all the princes, but notwithstanding, the beautiful eyes of the Princess Lina inspired him with a violent longing to try his fate. Unhappily he did not dare to come forward, being afraid that he should only be jeered at, or even turned away from the castle on account of his impudence.

Nevertheless, the Star Gazer had another dream. The lady in the golden dress appeared to him once more, holding in one hand two young laurel-trees, a cherry laurel and a rose laurel, and in the other hand a little golden rake, a little golden bucket, and a silken towel. She thus addressed him:

"Plant these two laurels in two large pots, rake them over with the rake, water them with the bucket, and wipe them with the towel. When they have grown as tall as a girl of fifteen, say to each of them, 'My beautiful laurel, with the golden rake I have raked you, with the golden bucket I have watered you, with the silken towel I have wiped you.' Then after that ask anything you choose, and the laurels will give it to you."

Michael thanked the lady in the golden dress, and when he woke he found the two laurel bushes beside him. So he carefully obeyed the orders he had been given by the lady.

The trees grew very fast, and when they were as tall as a girl of fifteen he said to the cherry laurel: "My lovely cherry laurel, with the golden rake I have raked thee, with the golden bucket I have watered thee, with the silken towel I have wiped thee. Teach me how to become invisible." Then there instantly appeared on the laurel a pretty white flower, which Michael gathered and stuck into his button-hole.

That evening, when the princesses went up-stairs to bed, he followed them barefoot, so that he might make no noise, and hid himself under one of the twelve beds, so as not to take up much room.

The princesses began at once to open their wardrobes and boxes. They took out of them the most magnificent dresses, which they put on before their mirrors, and when they had finished, turned themselves all around to admire their appearance.

Michael could see nothing from his hiding-place, but he could hear everything, and he listened to the princesses laughing and jumping with pleasure. At last the eldest said, "Be quick, my sisters, our partners will be impatient." At the end of an hour, when the Star Gazer heard no more noise, he peeped out and saw the twelve sisters in splendid garments,

with their satin shoes on their feet, and in their hands the bouquets he had brought them.

"Are you ready?" asked the eldest.

"Yes," replied the other eleven in chorus, and they took their places one by one behind her.

Then the eldest princess clapped her hands three times and a trap-door opened. All the princesses disappeared down a secret staircase, and Michael hastily followed them.

As he was following on the steps of the Princess Lina, he carelessly trod on her dress.

"There is somebody behind me," cried the princess; "some one is holding my dress."

"You foolish thing," said her eldest sister, "you are always afraid of something. It is only a nail that caught you."

They went down, down, down, till at last they came to a passage with a door at one end, which was only fastened with a latch. The eldest princess opened it, and they found themselves immediately in a lovely little wood, where the leaves were spangled with drops of silver which shone in the brilliant light of the moon.

They next crossed another wood where the leaves were sprinkled with gold, and after that another still, where the leaves glittered with diamonds.

At last the Star Gazer perceived a large lake, and on the shores of the lake twelve little boats with awnings, in which were seated twelve princes, who, grasping their oars, awaited the princesses.

Each princess entered one of the boats, and Michael slipped into that which held the youngest. The boats glided along rapidly, but Lina's, from being heavier, was always behind the rest. "We never went so slowly before," said the princess; "what can be the reason?"

"I don't know," answered the prince. "I assure you I am rowing as hard as I can."

On the other side of the lake the garden boy saw a beautiful castle splendidly illuminated, whence came the lively music of fiddles, kettle-drums, and trumpets.

In a moment they touched land, and the company jumped out of the boats; and the princes, after having securely fastened their barks, gave their arms to the princesses and conducted them to the castle.

Michael followed, and entered the ball-room in their train. Everywhere were mirrors, lights, flowers, and damask hangings.

The Star Gazer was quite bewildered at the magnificence of the sight. He placed himself out of the way in a corner, admiring the grace and beauty of the princesses. Their loveliness was of every kind. Some were fair and some were dark; some had chestnut hair, or curls darker still, and some had golden locks. Never were so many beautiful princesses seen together at one time, but the one whom the cow-boy thought the most beautiful and the most fascinating was the little princess with the velvet eyes.

With what eagerness she danced! Leaning on her partner's shoulder she swept by like a whirlwind. Her cheeks flushed, her eyes sparkled, and it was plain that she loved dancing better than anything else.

The poor boy envied those handsome young men with whom she danced so gracefully, but he did not know how little reason he had to be jealous of them.

The young men were really the princes who, to the number of fifty at least, had tried to steal the princesses' secret. The princesses had made them drink something like a philter, which froze the heart and left nothing but the love of dancing.

They danced on till the shoes of the princesses were worn into holes. When the cock crowed the third time the fiddles stopped, and a delicious supper was served by negro boys, consisting of sugared orange flowers, crystallized rose-leaves, powdered violets, cracknels, wafers, and other dishes, which are, as every one knows, the favorite food of princesses.

After supper the dancers all went back to their boats, and this time the Star Gazer entered that of the eldest princess. They crossed again the wood with the diamond-spangled

leaves, the wood with gold-sprinkled leaves, and the wood whose leaves glittered with drops of silver, and as a proof of what he had seen, the boy broke a small branch from a tree in the last wood. Lina turned as she heard the noise made by the breaking of the branch.

"What was that noise?" she said.

"It was nothing," replied her eldest sister; "it was only the screech of the barn-owl that roosts in one of the turrets of the castle."

While she was speaking Michael managed to slip in front, and running up the staircase, he reached the princesses' room first. He flung open the window and sliding down the vine which climbed up the wall, found himself in the garden just as the sun was beginning to rise, and it was time for him to set to his work.

That day, when he made up the bouquets, Michael hid the branch with the silver drops in the nosegay intended for the youngest princess.

When Lina discovered it she was much surprised. However, she said nothing to her sisters, but as she met the boy by accident while she was walking under the shade of the elms, she suddenly stopped as if to speak to him; then, altering her mind, went on her way.

The same evening the twelve sisters went again to the ball, and the Star Gazer again followed them and crossed the lake in Lina's boat. This time it was the prince who complained that the boat seemed very heavy.

"It is the heat," replied the princess. "I, too, have been feeling very warm."

During the ball she looked everywhere for the gardener's boy, but she never saw him.

As they came back, Michael gathered a branch from the wood with the gold-spangled leaves, and now it was the eldest princess who heard the noise that it made in breaking.

"It is nothing," said Lina; "only the cry of the owl that roosts in the turrets of the castle."

As soon as she got up she found the branch in her bouquet.

When the sisters went down she stayed a little behind and said to the cow-boy, "Where does this branch come from?"

"Your royal highness knows well enough," answered Michael.

"So you have followed us?"

"Yes, princess."

"How did you manage it? We never saw you."

"I hid myself," replied the Star Gazer quietly.

The princess was silent a moment, and then said:

"You know our secret!—keep it. Here is the reward of your discretion." And she flung the boy a purse of gold.

"I do not sell my silence," answered Michael, and he went away without picking up the purse.

For three nights Lina neither saw nor heard anything extraordinary; on the fourth she heard a rustling among the diamond-spangled leaves of the wood. That day there was a branch of the tree in her bouquet.

She took the Star Gazer aside, and said to him in a harsh voice, "You know what price my father has promised to pay for our secret?"

"I know, princess," answered Michael.

"Don't you mean to tell him?"

"That is not my intention."

"Are you afraid?"

"No, princess."

"What makes you so discreet, then?"

But Michael was silent.

Lina's sisters had seen her talking to the little garden boy, and jeered at her for it.

"What prevents your marrying him?" asked the eldest; "you would become a gardener too; it is a charming profession. You could live in a cottage at the end of the park, and help your husband to draw up water from the well, and when we get up you could bring us our bouquets."

The Princess Lina was very angry, and when the Star Gazer presented her bouquet, she received it in a disdainful manner.

Michael behaved most respectfully. He never raised his

eyes to her, but nearly all day she felt him at her side without ever seeing him.

One day she made up her mind to tell everything to her eldest sister.

"What!" said she, "this rogue knows our secret, and you never told me! I must lose no time in getting rid of him."

"But how?"

"Why, by having him taken to the tower with the dungeons, of course."

For this was the way that in old times beautiful princesses got rid of people who knew too much.

But the astonishing part of it was that the youngest sister did not seem at all to relish this method of stopping the mouth of the gardener's boy, who, after all, had said nothing to their father.

It was agreed that the question should be submitted to the other ten sisters. All were on the side of the eldest. Then the youngest sister declared that if they laid a finger on the little garden boy, she would herself go and tell their father the secret of the holes in their shoes.

At last it was decided that Michael should be put to the test; that they would take him to the ball, and at the end of supper would give him the philter which was to enchant him like the rest.

They sent for the Star Gazer, and asked him how he had contrived to learn their secret; but still he remained silent.

Then, in commanding tones, the eldest sister gave him the order they had agreed upon.

He only answered:

"I will obey."

He had really been present, invisible, at the council of princesses, and had heard all; but he had made up his mind to drink of the philter, and sacrifice himself to the happiness of her he loved.

Not wishing, however, to cut a poor figure at the ball by the side of the other dancers, he went at once to the laurels, and said:

"My lovely rose laurel, with the golden rake I have raked

thee, with the golden bucket I have watered thee, with the silken towel I have dried thee. Dress me like a prince."

A beautiful pink flower appeared. Michael gathered it, and found himself in a moment clothed in velvet, which was as black as the eyes of the little princess, with a cap to match, a diamond aigrette, and a blossom of the rose laurel in his button-hole.

Thus dressed, he presented himself that evening before the Duke of Belœil, and obtained leave to try and discover his daughter's secret. He looked so distinguished that hardly any one would have known who he was.

The twelve princesses went up-stairs to bed. Michael followed them, and waited behind the open door till they gave the signal for departure.

This time he did not cross in Lina's boat. He gave his arm to the eldest sister, danced with each in turn, and was so graceful that every one was delighted with him. At last the time came for him to dance with the little princess. She found him the best partner in the world, but he did not dare to speak a single word to her.

When he was taking her back to her place she said to him in a mocking voice:

"Here you are at the summit of your wishes: you are being treated like a prince."

"Don't be afraid," replied the Star Gazer gently. "You shall never be a gardener's wife."

The little princess stared at him with a frightened face, and he left her without waiting for an answer.

When the satin slippers were worn through, the fiddles stopped, and the negro boys set the table. Michael was placed next to the eldest sister, and opposite to the youngest.

They gave him the most exquisite dishes to eat, and the most delicate wines to drink; and in order to turn his head more completely, compliments and flattery were heaped on him from every side.

But he took care not to be intoxicated, either by the wine or the compliments.

At last the eldest sister made a sign, and one of the black pages brought in a large golden cup.

"The enchanted castle has no more secrets for you," she said to the Star Gazer. "Let us drink to your triumph."

He cast a lingering glance at the little princess, and without hesitation lifted the cup.

"Don't drink!" suddenly cried out the little princess; "I would rather marry a gardener."

And she burst into tears.

Michael flung the contents of the cup behind him, sprang over the table, and fell at Lina's feet. The rest of the princes fell likewise at the knees of the princesses, each of whom chose a husband and raised him to her side. The charm was broken.

The twelve couples embarked in the boats, which crossed back many times in order to carry over the other princes. Then they all went through the three [illegible] when they had passed the door of the underground a great noise was heard, as if the enchanted castle was crumbling to the earth.

They went straight to the room of the Duke of Belœil, who had just awaked. Michael held in his hand the golden cup, and he revealed the secret of the holes in the shoes.

"Choose, then," said the duke, "whichever you prefer."

"My choice is already made," replied the garden boy, and he offered his hand to the youngest princess, who blushed and lowered her eyes.

The Princess Lina did not become a gardener's wife; on the contrary, it was the Star Gazer who became a prince; but before the marriage ceremony the princess insisted that her lover should tell her how he came to discover the secret.

So he showed her the two laurels which had helped him, and she, like a prudent girl, thinking they gave him too much advantage over his wife, cut them off at the root and threw them in the fire.

# *The Herd-Boy*

THERE was once a poor herd-boy, who had neither kith nor kin except his stepmother, who was a wicked woman, and hardly allowed him food or clothing. Thus the poor boy suffered great privation; during all the livelong day he had to tend cattle, and scarcely ever got more than a morsel of bread morning and evening.

One day his stepmother had gone out without leaving him any food; he had, therefore, to drive his cattle to the field fasting, and being very hungry, he wept bitterly. But at the approach of noon he dried his tears, and went up on a green hill, where he was in the habit of resting, while the sun was hot in the summer. On this hill it was always cool and dewy under the shady trees; but now he remarked that there was no dew, that the ground was dry, and the grass trampled down. This seemed to him very singular, and he wondered who could have trodden down the green grass. While thus sitting and thinking, he perceived something that lay glittering in the sunshine. Springing up to see what it might be, he found it was a pair of very, very small shoes of the whitest and clearest glass. The boy now felt quite happy again, forgot his hunger, and amused himself the whole day with the little glass shoes.

In the evening when the sun had sunk behind the forest, the herd-boy called his cattle and drove them to the village. When he had gone some way, he was met by a very little boy, who in a friendly tone greeted him with "Good evening!" "Good evening again," answered the herd-boy. "Hast thou found my shoes, which I lost this morning in the green grass?" asked the little boy. The herd-boy answered:

"Yes, I have found them, but, my good little fellow, let me keep them. I intended to give them to my stepmother, and then, perhaps, I should have got a little meat when I came home." But the boy prayed so earnestly, "Give me back my shoes; another time I will be as kind to thee," that the herd-boy returned him the shoes. The little one then, greatly delighted, gave him a friendly nod, and went springing away.

The herd-boy now collected his cattle together, and continued his way homeward. When he reached his dwelling it was already dark, and his stepmother chided him for returning so late. "There's still some porridge in the pot," said she; "eat now, and pack thyself off to bed, so that thou canst get up in the morning betimes, like other folks." The poor herd-boy durst not return any answer to these hard words, but ate, and then slunk to bed in the hayloft, where he was accustomed to sleep. The whole night he dreamed of nothing but the little boy and his little glass shoes.

Early in the morning, before the sun shone from the east, the boy was waked by his stepmother's voice: "Up with thee, thou sluggard! It is broad day, and the animals are not to stand hungry for thy sloth." He instantly rose, got a bit of bread, and drove the cattle to the pasture.

When he came to the green hill, which was wont to be so cool and shady, he again wondered to see that the dew was all swept from the grass, and the ground dry, even more so than on the preceding day. While he thus sat thinking, he observed something lying in the grass and glittering in the bright sunshine. Springing toward it, he found it was a very, very tiny red cap set round with small golden bells. At this he was greatly delighted, forgot his hunger, and amused himself all day with the elegant little cap.

In the evening, when the sun had sunk behind the forest, the herd-boy gathered his cattle together and drove them toward the village. When on his way, he was met by a very little and, at the same time, very fair damsel. She greeted him in a friendly tone with "Good evening!" "Good even-

ing again," answered the lad. The damsel then said, "Hast thou found my cap, which I lost this morning in the green grass?" The boy answered: "Yes, I have found it: but let me keep it, my pretty maid. I thought of giving it to my wicked stepmother, and then, perhaps, I shall get a little meat when I go home." But the little damsel entreated so urgently, "Give me back my cap; another time I will be as good to thee," that the lad gave her the little cap, when she appeared highly delighted, gave him a friendly nod, and sprang off.

On his return home he was received as usual by his cruel stepmother, and dreamed the whole night of the little damsel and her pretty red cap.

In the morning he was turned out fasting, and on coming to the hill, found it was drier than on either of the preceding days, and that the grass was trodden down in large rings. It then entered his mind all that he had heard of the little elves, how in the summer nights they were wont to dance in the dewy grass, and he fancied that these must be elfin-rings, for elfin-dances. While sitting absorbed in thought, he chanced to strike his foot against a little bell that lay in the grass, and it gave forth so sweet a sound that all the cattle came running together, and stood still to listen. Now the boy was delighted, and could do nothing but play with the little bell, till he forgot his troubles and the cattle forgot to graze. And so the day passed much more quickly than can be imagined.

When it drew toward evening, and the sun was level with the tree-tops, the boy called his cattle and prepared to return home. But let him entice and call them as he might, they were not to be drawn from the pasture, for it was a delightful grassy spot. Then thought the boy to himself, "Perhaps they will pay more heed to the little bell." So drawing forth the bell, he tingled it as he went along the way. In one moment the bell-cow came running after him, and was followed by the rest of the herd. At this the boy was overjoyed, for he was well aware what an advantage the little bell would be to him. As he was going on, a very little old man met him, and

kindly bade him a good evening. "Good evening again," said the boy. The old man asked, "Hast thou found my little bell, which I lost this morning in the green grass?" The herd-boy answered, "Yes, I have found it." The old man said, "Then give it me back." "No," answered the boy, "I am not so doltish as you may think. The day before yesterday I found two small glass shoes, which a little boy wheedled from me. Yesterday I found a cap, which I gave to a little damsel; and now you come to take from me the little bell, which is so good for calling the cattle. Other finders get a reward for their pains, but I get nothing." The little man then used many fair words, with the view of recovering his bell, but all to no purpose. At last he said: "Give me back the little bell, and I will give thee another, with which thou mayest call thy cattle; thou shalt, moreover, obtain three wishes." These seemed to the boy no unfavorable terms, and he at once agreed to them, adding: "As I may wish whatever I will, I will wish to be a king, and I will wish to have a great palace, and also a very beautiful queen." "Thou hast wished no trifling wishes," said the old man, "but bear well in mind what I now tell thee. To-night when all are sleeping, thou shalt go hence, till thou comest to a royal palace, which lies due north. Take this pipe of bone. If thou fallest into trouble, blow it; if thou afterward fallest into great trouble, blow it again; but if, on a third occasion, thou findest thyself in still greater peril, break the pipe in two, and I will help thee, as I have promised." The boy gave the old man many thanks for his gifts, and the elf-king—for it was he—went his way. But the boy bent his steps homeward, rejoicing, as he went along, that he should so soon escape from tending cattle for his wicked stepmother.

When he reached the village it was already dark, and his stepmother had been long awaiting his coming. She was in a great rage, so that the poor lad got blows instead of food. "This will not last long," thought the boy, comforting himself with the reflection, as he went up to his hayloft, where he laid himself down and slumbered for a short time. About

midnight, long before the cock crew, he arose, slipped out of the house, and began his journey in a northward direction, as the old man had enjoined. He traveled incessantly, over hill and dale, and twice did the sun rise and twice set, while he was still on his way.

Toward evening on the third day he came to a royal palace, which was so spacious that he thought he should never again see the like. He went to the kitchen and asked for employment. "What dost thou know, and what canst thou do?" inquired the master-cook. "I can tend cattle in the pasture," answered the boy. The master-cook said: "The king is in great want of a herd-boy; but it will, no doubt, be with thee as with the others, that every day thou losest one of the herd." The boy answered: "Hitherto I have never lost any beast that I drove to the field." He was then taken into the king's service, and tended the king's cattle; but the wolf never got a beast from him, so he was well esteemed by all the king's servants.

One evening, as the herd-boy was driving his cattle home, he observed a beautiful young damsel standing at a window and listening to his song. Though he seemed hardly to notice her, he, nevertheless, felt a glow suffused over him. Some time passed in this manner, the herd-boy being delighted every time he saw the young maiden; though he was still ignorant that she was the king's daughter. It happened one day that the young girl came to him as he was driving the herd to their pasture. She had with her a little snow-white lamb, and begged him in a friendly tone to take charge of her lamb, and protect it from the wolves in the forest. At this the herd-boy was so confused that he could neither answer nor speak. But he took the lamb with him, and found his greatest pleasure in guarding it, and the animal attached itself to him, as a dog to its master. From that day the herd-boy frequently enjoyed the sight of the fair princess. In the morning, when he drove his cattle to the pasture, she would stand at the window listening to his song; but in the evening, when he returned from the forest, she would descend to

caress her little lamb, and say a few friendly words to the herd-boy.

Time rolled on. The herd-boy had grown up into a comely, vigorous young man; and the princess had sprung up and was become the fairest maiden that could be found far or near. Nevertheless, she came every evening, according to her early custom, to caress her lamb. But one day the princess was missing and could nowhere be found. This event caused a great sorrow and commotion in the royal court, for the princess was beloved by every one; but the king and queen, as was natural, grieved the most intensely of all. The king sent forth a proclamation over the whole land, that whosoever should recover his daughter should be rewarded with her hand and half the kingdom. This brought a number of princes, and knights, and warriors from the east and the west. Cased in steel they rode forth with arms and attendants, to seek the lost princess; but few were they that returned from their wanderings, and those that did return brought no tidings of her they went in quest of. The king and queen were now inconsolable, and thought that they had sustained an irreparable loss. The herd-boy, as before, drove his cattle to the pasture, but it was in sadness, for the king's fair daughter engrossed his thoughts every day and every hour.

One night in a dream the little elfin king seemed to stand before him and to say: "To the north! to the north! there thou wilt find thy queen." At this the young man was so overjoyed that he sprang up, and as he woke, there stood the little man, who nodded to him, and repeated: "To the north! to the north!" He then vanished, leaving the youth in doubt whether or not it were an illusion. As soon as it was day he went to the hall of the palace, and requested an audience of the king. At this all the royal servants wondered, and the master-cook said: "Thou hast served for so many years that thou mayest, no doubt, get thy wages increased without speaking to the king himself." But the young man persisted in his request, and let it be understood that he had something

very different in his mind. On entering the royal apartment, the king demanded his errand, when the young man said: "I have served you faithfully for many years, and now desire permission to go and seek for the princess." Hereupon the king grew angry and said: "How canst thou, a herd-boy, think of doing that which no warrior nor prince has been able to accomplish?" But the youth answered boldly, that he would either discover the princess or, for her sake, lay down his life. The king then let his anger pass, and called to mind the old proverb: *A heart worthy of scarlet often lies under a coarse woolen cloak.* He therefore gave orders that the herd-boy should be equipped with a charger and all things requisite. But the youth said: "I reck not of riding; give me but your word and permission, together with means sufficient." The king then wished him success in his enterprise; but all the boys and other servants in the court laughed at the herd-boy's rash undertaking.

The young man journeyed toward the north, as he had been instructed by the elf-king, and proceeded on and on until he could not be far distant from the world's end. When he had thus traveled over mountains and desolate ways, he came at length to a great lake, in the midst of which there was a fair island, and on the island a royal palace, much more spacious than the one whence he came. He went down to the water's edge, and surveyed the palace on every side. While thus viewing it, he perceived a damsel with golden locks standing at one of the windows, and making signs with a silken band, such as the princess' lamb was accustomed to wear. At this sight the young man's heart leaped in his breast; for it rushed into his mind that the damsel could be no other than the princess herself. He now began to consider how he should cross over the water to the great palace; but could hit upon no plan. At last the thought occurred to him that he would make a trial whether the little elves would afford him some assistance; and he took forth his pipe and blew a long-continued strain. He had scarcely ceased when he heard a voice behind him, saying "Good evening." "Good evening

again," answered the youth, turning about: when just before him there stood the little boy whose glass shoes he had found in the grass. "What dost thou wish of me?" asked the elfin boy. The other answered: "I wish thee to convey me across the water to the royal palace." The boy replied, "Place thyself on my back." The youth did so; and at the same instant the boy changed his form and became an immensely huge hawk, that darted through the air, and stopped not until it reached the island as the young man had requested.

He now went up to the hall of the palace and asked for employment. "What dost thou understand and what canst thou do?" inquired the master-cook. "I can take charge of cattle," answered the youth. The master-cook then said: "The giant is just now in great want of a herdsman; but it will, I dare say, be with thee as with the others; for if a beast by chance is lost, thy life is forfeited." The youth answered: "This seems to me a hard condition; but I will, nevertheless, agree to it." The master-cook then accepted his service, and he was to commence on the following day.

The young man now drove the giant's cattle, and sung his song, and rang his little bell, as he had formerly done; and the princess sat at her window, and listened, and made signs to him that he should not appear to notice her. In the evening he drove the herd from the forest, and was met by the giant, who said to him, "Thy life is in the place of any one that may be missing." But not a beast was wanting, let the giant count them as he would. Now the giant was quite friendly, and said, "Thou shalt be my herdsman all thy days." He then went down to the lake, loosed his enchanted ship, and rode thrice round the island, as he was wont to do.

During the giant's absence the princess stationed herself at the window and sang:

"To-night, to-night, thou herdsman bold,
A-sleeping will be the giant old,
And comest thou hither to liberate me,
My crown I will gladly bestow upon thee."

The young man listened to her song, and understood from it that he was to go in the night and deliver the princess. He therefore went away without appearing to notice anything. But when it was late, and all were sunk in deep sleep, he stealthily approached the tower, placed himself below the window, and sang:

> " Oh, princess, here is thy herdsman true,
> Beseeching that thou wilt thy vows renew;
> That thou wilt descend from thy tow'r so high,
> And fall to these arms, like a star from the sky."

The princess whispered: " I am bound with chains of gold, come and break them." The young man now knew no other course than again to blow with his pipe a very long-continued strain; when instantly he heard a voice behind him saying, " Good evening," " Good evening again," answered the youth, looking round; when there stood the little elf-king, from whom he had got the little bell and the pipe. " What wilt thou with me? " inquired the old man. The young man answered: " I beseech you to convey me and the princess hence." The little man said, " Follow me." They then ascended to the maiden's tower; the castle gate opened spontaneously, and when the old man touched the chain it burst in fragments. All three then went down to the margin of the lake, when the elf-king sang:

> ' Oh, pike so faithful, oh, pike so true,
> Swim over to me thro' the waters blue;
> A princess fair on thy back shall ride
> And a king of the future shall sit by her side."

At the same moment appeared the little damsel, whose cap the herd-boy had found in the grass. She sprang down to the lake, and was instantly changed into a large pike that sported about in the water. Then said the elf-king: " Sit ye on the back of the pike. But the princess must not be terrified, let what may happen; for then will my power be at an end." Having so said, the old man vanished; but the youth

and the fair princess followed his injunctions, and the pike bore them rapidly along through the billows.

While all this was taking place, the giant awoke, looked through the window, and perceived the herd-boy floating on the water together with the young princess. Instantly snatching up his eagle-plumage, he flew after them. When the pike heard the clapping of the giant's wings, it dived far down under the surface of the water, whereat the princess was so terrified that she uttered a scream. Then was the elf-king's power at an end, and the giant seized the two fugitives in his talons. On his return to the island he caused the young herdsman to be cast into a dark dungeon, full fifteen fathoms underground; but the princess was placed in her tower, and strictly watched, lest she should again attempt to escape.

The youth now lay in the captive's tower, and was in deep affliction at finding himself unable to deliver the princess, and, at the same time, having most probably forfeited his own life. The words of the elfin-king now occurred to his memory: "If, on a third occasion, thou findest thyself in great peril, break the pipe in two, and I will help thee." As a last resource, therefore, he drew forth the little pipe and broke it in two. At the same moment he heard behind him the words, "Good evening." "Good evening again," answered the youth; and when he looked round there stood the little old man close by him, who asked, "What wilt thou with me?" The young man answered: "I wish to deliver the princess, and to convey her home to her father." The old man then led him through many locked doors and many splendid apartments till they came to a spacious hall, filled with all kinds of weapons, swords, spears, and axes, of which some shone like polished steel, others like burnished gold. The old man kindled a fire on the hearth, and said, "Undress thyself!" The young man did so, and the little man burnt his old garments. He then went to a large iron chest, out of which he took a costly suit of armor, resplendent with the purest gold. "Dress thyself," said he; the young man did so. When he was thus armed from head to foot, the old

man bound a sharp sword by his side, and said: "It is decreed that the giant shall fall by this sword, and this armor no steel can penetrate." The young herdsman felt quite at ease in the golden armor, and moved as gracefully as if he had been a prince of the highest degree. They then returned to the dark dungeon; the youth thanked the elf-king for his timely succor, and they parted from each other.

Till a late hour there was a great bustle and hurrying in the whole palace; for the giant was on that day to celebrate his marriage with the beautiful princess, and had invited many of his kin to the feast. The princess was clad in the most sumptuous manner, and decorated with a crown and rings of gold, and other costly ornaments, which had been worn by the giant's mother. The health of the wedded pair was then drunk amid all kinds of rejoicing; and there was no lack of good cheer, both of meat and drink. But the bride wept without intermission, and her tears were so hot that they felt like fire on her cheeks.

When night approached, and the giant was about to conduct his bride to the nuptial chamber, he sent his pages to fetch the young herdsman, who lay in the dungeon. But when they entered the prison, the captive had disappeared, and in his stead there stood a bold warrior, with sword in hand, and completely armed. At this apparition the young men were frightened and fled; but were followed by the herdsman, who thus ascended to the court of the palace where the guests were assembled to witness his death. When the giant cast his eyes on the doughty warrior, he was exasperated, and exclaimed: "Out upon thee, thou base troll!" As he spoke his eyes became so piercing that they saw through the young herdsman's armor; but the fearless youth said: "Here shalt thou strive with me for thy fair bride." The giant was not inclined to stay, and was about to withdraw; but the herdsman drew his sword, which blazed like a flame of fire. When the giant recognized the sword, under which he was doomed to fall, he was terror-struck and sank on the earth; but the young herdsman advanced boldly, swung round his sword,

and struck a blow so powerful that the giant's head was separated from his body.

On witnessing this exploit, the wedding guests were overcome with fear, and departed, each to his home; but the princess ran forth and thanked the brave herdsman for having saved her. They then proceeded to the water, loosed the giant's enchanted ship, and rowed away from the island. On their arrival at the king's court, there was great joy that the king had recovered his daughter for whom he had mourned so long. There was afterward a sumptuous wedding, and the young herdsman obtained the king's fair daughter. They lived happily for very many years, and had many beautiful children.

# *Fulfilled*

ONE Christmas Eve two poor travelers came to a farm-house and begged a night's lodging. Nay, said the people of the house, they had no room for travelers and beggars! So the wayfarers went on their way until they came to a cottage where lived a poor farm-laborer and his wife. They knocked at the door and asked if they might stay the night there. Yes, was the reply, they might stay, and welcome, if they would put up with such as was there, for they were only very humble folk. The strangers thanked them very warmly, and entered the house. They had not been there long when the wife whispered to her husband:

"We must see if we cannot find something nice for our guests, on the eve of such a holy festival. We must kill our little kid."

"Yes, let us do that," said the man.

So they killed the kid, and roasted it for supper, and they ate and were glad of heart that holy eve.

When bedtime came, they gave their guests their own bed, which was the only one they had, and then they spread some straw upon the floor and slept there.

Next morning they all went to church together, and the cottagers begged the travelers to stay with them the two feast-days, "for, now there is that good meat," said they, "you must help us to eat it."

The strangers agreed to do this, and stayed with them both Christmas Day and the day following.

On the morning of the third day, when they were to leave, the travelers thanked the cottagers for their hospitality. They were very sorry, they said, that they had nothing to give them in payment.

"Oh, that does not signify in the least!" said both the man and his wife; they had not taken them in for the sake of any reward.

Just as they were going out of the door, however, one of the strangers said:

"But has the kid no horns?"

"Oh, yes," replied the man, "but they are worth nothing." He thought perhaps the strangers had some use for horns, and would have begged for them.

"How many horns has the kid?" asked the traveler again.

"Two," answered the man, much surprised at the question.

"Well, then, you may have two wishes," said the visitor; "choose for yourselves."

But the man said they wished for nothing save their daily bread, a peaceful life in this world, and heaven when they died.

"God grant it!" said the strangers; "we will come again in a year's time." And they went their way.

From that day forward everything thrived and prospered in the most marvelous manner with the cottagers. Their only cow presented them with three fine calves, their two sheep had eight lambs, their sow so many little pigs that they could hardly count them, and everything that had been sown, or that they now sowed in their little bit of land, brought forth a hundredfold. Thus they became quite well-to-do, and they set to work building and adding to their house, making it much larger and lighter.

Meanwhile they looked forward with gladness to Christmas-time, when the two strangers should come again, for they knew very well they had to thank them for all this prosperity. Their neighbors and the village-folk marveled greatly at all the good things that kept streaming in upon them; and the people at the farm close by, where the two travelers had been refused admittance, wondered most of all. When they heard, what the poor cottagers themselves made no secret of, that all this prosperity was owing to the good offices of the two wayfarers who had been their guests last Christmas, they were

bitterly angry, and considered it had been as good as stolen from them, for they might have had the wishes if they had taken the travelers in. When these same neighbors heard that the strangers had promised to come again at Christmas, they begged and entreated the good-natured cottagers to promise them that when the travelers arrived they would send them on to the farm.

On Christmas Eve, at twilight, the same two travelers came and knocked at the cottage door. Both the man and his wife ran out to meet them and thank them for all the prosperity that had accrued to them from their visit. The strangers then asked if they could stay the night there, and spend Christmas with them. Yes, said the man and his wife, nothing would have pleased them so well, but they had promised the people at the farm close by that they would send them over to them when they came. They were so vexed at having sent them away last year, and were anxious now to make up for it.

"As you will," answered the strangers; "we will go over there this evening, but early in the morning we will return and go to church with you."

So they went to the farm.

A boy had been stationed at the door to keep a lookout for them, and he at once ran in and announced their coming. Both the farmer and his wife rushed out to meet their prospective guests, and with many apologies for having sent them away last year, led them into their best parlor. The farmer had killed a fat ox, and his wife had roasted it for them; so there was soup and roast meat, and cake and good ale, and old mead and wine into the bargain. They had a room to themselves in the upper story, with two large beds in it, with feather mattresses and pillows.

Next morning the strangers were up early, and the farmer and his wife begged them to stay at least over Christmas; but the wayfarers said they must be leaving, as they intended going to church and afterward continuing their journey. The farmer thereupon harnessed his horses to his best carriage. "They must not walk there, they should drive," he said.

They thanked him courteously, and, before leaving, one said to his host and hostess that they did not know what return they could make to them for their hospitality, for they had no money. "But wait," he added, "had the ox any horns?"

"Yes, indeed, sure enough it had," answered the farmer. Having heard from the cottagers of the talk there had been last year about the kid's horns, he understood at once what his guest alluded to.

"How many horns has it?" asked the stranger.

The wife, pulling her husband by the sleeve, whispered, "Say four."

So the man answered that the ox had four horns.

"Ah!" said the stranger, "then you can have four wishes, two for each of you."

And they got into the carriage and drove to the church where the cottagers were awaiting them.

The farmer had himself driven them, and he made all possible haste to get back home again, when, he told himself, he and his wife would settle about their four wishes. He was just thinking of this when one of the animals stumbled and broke a trace. The farmer on this was obliged to get down and mend it. Then he drove on, but it was not long before the other horse stumbled.

"Ah! the wicked elves take you both!" he cried, and hardly had he said this before both the animals vanished, and there he sat in the carriage, with the reins in his hands, but nothing to drive. So he had to leave the vehicle standing there, and continue his journey on foot. Here was one of his wishes fulfilled. But he did not trouble himself much about that when he remembered that he and his wife still had three more. He could easily get as many horses as he wanted, together with many other good things. So he trudged quite contentedly along the high road.

Meantime his wife was at home, waiting and waiting and longing for her husband to come that they might begin to wish. She went outside and looked up the road, but he was not in sight.

"If he were only here, the lazy bones!" she exclaimed, and as she spoke there he stood.

"Ah!" she cried, "now I have wasted one of my wishes! But how is it you come trudging along like any vagabond? What have you done with the carriage and horses?"

"I wished the wicked elves might take my best horses, and they have taken them. You have only yourself to thank. There is no luck in such cheating. It was you who said the ox had four horns. I only wish two of them were sticking out of your own head." And no sooner had he said so than there they were.

Three out of their four wishes had now been fulfilled, and the only one left belonged to the woman.

"Dear little wife," said her husband coaxingly, "now make a good use of your wish and ask for a heap of money, that all may yet be well."

"No, thank you," retorted the woman, "and I going about with a pair of horns until the day of my death!"

Determined not to do that at any cost, she straightway wished the wicked elves might take the horns, and in an instant they vanished.

Thus the farmer and his wife were no richer for all their wishes, but rather the poorer by a pair of horses and an ox.

# *The Golden Bough*

IN one portion of Fairyland there lived a powerful king, not very much beloved by his subjects because he was exceedingly high and mighty. His will was law and his commands had to be obeyed at once. It was the same in his family as in his kingdom, he ruled all with a strong hand. This king in appearance was rough and rugged, and his face was of a dark color, so that he was known far and wide as the Brown King.

In the family of the king was one son, but unfortunately he was frightfully deformed in person and his features were really ugly. The boy was kept within the palace as closely as possible until he grew up, but when he became a man he wanted his liberty, and the king desired him to choose a maiden who one day would be queen. But alas! none would give heed to him as he was so unattractive. The king, however, thought more about his own interests than anything else, so he had cast his eyes on the daughter of a powerful king, who was also very rich, as a suitable wife for his son.

Their countries joined, and their two kingdoms would, if united by such a union, become the strongest in the world. He thought that she was the most proper person for his son, because she could not reproach him for his deformity, as she was quite as deformed as he was; she was a cripple and could not stand on the ground without help. In fact, nothing could be more dreadful as to her person. But her mind was as lovely as her face and shape were otherwise; and it seemed as if Nature intended in this way to make amends for her deformity.

The Brown King having got the Princess Trognon's picture

(this was her name), set it up in the great hall of his palace under a canopy of state, and sent for the Prince Torticoli, whom he commanded to look upon it and study it well, for that was the portrait of Trognon who was to be his wife.

Torticoli cast his eyes upon it, but soon turned them aside with great contempt, which made his father very angry.

"Are you not satisfied with it?" said the king in a grave tone.

"No, my lord," said the prince, "I could never be satisfied to marry a creature like that."

"It is not right," replied the king, "to find fault with this princess, as you are yourself so deformed as to frighten people who look at you."

"For that very reason," said the prince, "I would not look upon any one so deformed and ugly. I can hardly endure myself as it is, what should I do with such a companion?"

The king replied with severity: "Your fears are to no purpose; this is the person I have chosen for you. 'Tis enough, I command it."

Torticoli made no reply, but, bowing to the ground, withdrew.

The Brown King had not been used to meet with the slightest opposition to his wishes, so that his son's refusal threw him into a terrible passion. He ordered him to be imprisoned in the tower built on purpose for disobedient people, but there had not been any one in it for two hundred years, so that everything was out of repair. The furniture was very old and of such a queer shape and of such an odd make that people looked upon it as a curiosity.

The prince was very fond of reading; he asked for some books, but was only permitted the use of the library belonging to the tower. He was much disappointed with this, for he found that the books were very old, and written in a language he did not understand. However, he looked them over in hopes of finding some words whose meaning he might pick out and so learn the language.

The Brown King, thinking that his son Torticoli would soon

be tired of his prison, went on with the arrangement with Trognon as if he had consented. He sent ambassadors to the king his neighbor, asking for his daughter, promising the princess all that her heart could wish. Trognon's father was delighted with the thought of such an alliance, and glad that he could so easily get rid of such a deformed daughter. He at once accepted the Brown King's terms, and placed Prince Torticoli's portrait, which the ambassadors brought with them, in a long gallery, where Trognon saw it by her father's command.

When she looked upon it she started, and then held down her head and burst into tears. Her father was much displeased at this, and sent at once for a looking-glass, and bade her see herself, after which surely she would find no reason to weep.

"But I do not desire the prince, my lord," said she; "if I did I should be very wrong to refuse, but I shall be better able to bear my misfortune if I am allowed to suffer alone. I would not let another person have the trouble of seeing me day after day. I am content as I am, and shall be so if I am never forced to change my position or place. I shall not complain."

This all seemed reasonable, but the king was not to be moved, and ordered her to prepare for her departure with the ambassadors, who came to demand her.

So when all was ready she traveled in a litter as close as she could, so that no one should see her; and we must now leave her on the road, to see what the prince was doing in the tower. His guards were not allowed to speak to him; and that he might be the more willing to consent to his father's wishes, the king commanded that he should be served with bad food, and in other ways treated unkindly.

The Brown King knew how to make people obey him, if not from love, by fear, but the prince was so well beloved by all those about him that they did not always follow the instructions of their ruler.

As he was one day walking in the gallery of the tower, very sad and melancholy, thinking over his misfortune in being so deformed and ugly, and also in being expected to unite himself

with a princess in a worse condition than himself, he cast his eyes upon the windows, where he saw several pictures so well painted, in colors so bright, and designs so well carried out, that he looked upon them with great delight, but he could not understand the meaning of these designs, which were taken from history, and had to do with matters that were several hundred years old. What impressed him most was the picture of a man so like himself that one would have thought it was his own portrait.

This man was shown to be in the turret of the tower, searching in the wall, where he found a golden key, with which he opened a cabinet. There were several other figures he was pleased with, and on most of the windows he found his own picture. "How does it happen," said he to himself, "that I am painted here so many years before I was born? and how unfortunate that the painter should have in his mind such a person as I am." He saw also the picture of a beautiful lady, whose features were so regular and her person so lovely that he could never tire of looking at it. There were also many objects of various kinds all so well shown that he was sure the painter must have been a very clever man.

He continued in this gallery until it was quite dark, so that he could no longer see the pictures, or distinguish one from the other. When he returned to his bed-chamber he happened to pick up an old manuscript written upon vellum, with leaves painted around the edges, and a cover of blue and gold. On looking at it more closely he was surprised to see the same things as he had seen on the windows, but though he tried to read it, he could not. At last he turned over a leaf where musicians were shown, hearing music the while; and then turned over another leaf where a number of people were playing cards and dice. On still another leaf there was shown a wedding party with ladies richly dressed, all wonderfully beautiful. On turning the next leaf he smelled the odors of a rich feast. The figures were all eating, and they were all about nine inches in height. One of them turned to the prince and cried out, "Here's your health, Prince Torticoli. Restore to us our

queen, and it will be well with you; if you do not, trouble will come to you."

At these words the prince, who began to be afraid, let the book drop out of his hand, and fell down like a dead man. His guards hearing a noise, ran in, loving him as they did; and all that could be done was done to recover him from his fit. When he was able to speak, they asked him what was the matter. He replied, that he felt so ill he had not strength to support himself, and having looked through that book, he fancied he had seen and heard queer things, so that he felt very much afraid. His guards were much troubled at this, and in spite of the king's orders gave him plenty of food to eat. When he had refreshed himself he took up the book again, and not finding what he had seen before, he came to the conclusion that he had been dreaming.

The next day he went again to the gallery, and looking at the pictures a second time, saw them move, walk, hunt, fish, and build, as if they had been alive. The images were all small, and his own portrait was everywhere among them with the same kind of clothes that he was then wearing. He went up into the tower fort, and found there the golden key. Having made a very good meal that day, he did not think he was out of his mind. "This is too mysterious a business," thought he, "for me to neglect finding out what it all means. Perhaps I shall discover something in the fort." So thither he went. Knocking against the wall, he thought it sounded hollow; so he took a hammer and beat the stones out of the wall, where he found a very nicely made key, but did not know where or how he could use it. At last he saw an old cupboard in a corner of the fort; it was made of common wood, and looked very much out of repair. He wished to open it, but could not find the lock, though he examined it very closely. At last he saw a small hole, and thinking that perhaps the key might be of some use, put it in and turned it with all his strength, thus opening the cupboard, which he found fine and wonderful inside, all the drawers being crystal and amber, inlaid with precious stones. When one of them was drawn out he found

smaller ones on both sides, as well as on the top and at the bottom, separated from each other by mother-of-pearl. He drew out the first, and the others afterward; and found each of them full of arms, rich crowns, and beautiful portraits. Torticoli was charmed at the sight, so that by degrees he pulled out all the drawers. In the end he found a small key made of a single emerald, with which he opened a golden shutter that was at the bottom of a drawer, and to his great surprise he found a carbuncle, of which a large box was made. He took it out of the shutter, and to his great astonishment when he opened it found it contained a man's hand holding a picture case.

Prince Torticoli felt very much frightened, his hair stood on end, and his legs trembled so that he was obliged to sit down on the ground, holding the box in his hand.

He remembered what the little image in the book had said to him—if he behaved well all would be right for him. So, acting like a man of courage, he spoke to the hand: "Tell me, unfortunate hand, if thou canst, what sad adventure has befallen thee, and say if it is in my power to help thee in any way; if so, you may depend upon me to do all I am able."

At these words the hand moved, and made such signs with its fingers that Torticoli was able to understand what it meant quite as plainly as though it had spoken. The hand, as it were, said: "Know, then, that it is in your power to oblige Beauty in the highest degree, from whom I am separated by the cruelty of a jealous rival. Go at once into the gallery and look where the sunbeams shine; seek there and you will find my treasure." Then the hand ceased moving and making signs.

The prince asked several questions, but it made no reply. "Where shall I put you?" said Torticoli.

To this question the hand made new signs, by which the prince understood that he must replace it in the cupboard where he found it; this he at once did, putting everything in the same order, and placing the key in the same wall from whence he took it. He now went directly to the gallery, and on his arrival the windows began to clatter and shake. He ex-

amined the place to find where the sun shone the brightest, and saw it was upon the picture of a youth, so beautiful and of such a noble presence that he was delighted. He lifted up the picture and came to an ebony board with gold borders. He did not know how to move it, or whether he should do so if he could. He looked at the windows, and as he was looking, the board lifted itself up, and behind it he saw an ante-chamber in which were statues. He went into it, up some stairs which had golden banisters, and came into a hall decorated with precious stones; he passed through this and entered several fine apartments, in which were charming pictures and rich furniture, until he came at last to a small chamber. Here he saw a lady of great beauty sleeping on a couch, round which were curtains of blue gauze. The prince walked softly for fear of waking her. He heard her say something as she slept, which he found to be a complaint of being ill-used. "Dost thou think, traitor," said she, "that I can love thee after thou has taken away my dear Trasimenes? Ah, my dear one, shall I never see thee any more?" The prince saw tears forcing their way from under her closed eyelids and trickle down her cheeks. He stood immovable, and did not know whether he ought to wake her or leave her. He thought that Trasimenes was her lover, and that it might be his hand that he had found in the box. While he was thus thinking, he heard the sweetest music that ever a man heard; it was from a cluster of nightingales and other birds, all in perfect harmony. In a few moments he saw a large eagle enter, flying softly along, holding in its beak a Golden Bough laden with rubies, like cherries. The bird fixed his eyes upon the lady. He fanned her with his wings, and hovered over her for a few moments, and then, turning to the prince, he put the Golden Bough in his hand. Upon this, the birds that had been singing so sweetly gave a cry which made the whole palace ring. The prince thought by this that the lady was enchanted, and that the work of freeing her was to be his. He approached, bent one knee to the ground, and smote her gently with the Golden Bough, saying, "Lovely creature, whom I find sleeping by some magical power that I do not

know, I conjure you in the name of Trasimenes to resume your proper form and position."

The lady opened her eyes and saw the eagle; then began to weep, saying, "Stay, my dear lover, stay!" but the great bird gave a dreadful cry and flew away, taking all the musical birds with him.

The lady then turned to Torticoli and said: "I owe to you everything, for you have released me from a sleep in which I have lain for more than two hundred years. A magician who loved me was the cause of all my misery. You have broken the spell, and if it is in my power to return your kindness by doing you a service, I shall be only too glad to do it. I am a mistress of all the arts of the fairies, and can make you as happy as you may desire to be."

"Madam," replied the prince, throwing himself at her feet, "you see how deformed I am, and what a frightful figure I appear; I am called Torticoli, which means derision; change my appearance, so that I may not look so dreadful for the future."

The fairy touched him with the Golden Bough, saying, "Rise the most accomplished and the most well-favored man in the world! No one before you, nor after, shall ever be equal to you. Your name for the future shall be Nonesuch, for none ever deserved it more than you."

The grateful prince overwhelmed her with thanks, and could not find words sufficiently to express his gratitude.

The fairy commanded him to rise, and as he did so, he saw himself in the glasses which adorned her chamber; but Torticoli was lost in Nonesuch. He was three feet higher, his hair hung in long curls on his shoulders, his movements became graceful, his features completely changed; in a word, he was a different person altogether.

"I am sorry I cannot tell you what may happen to you," said the fairy. "Go, prince, fly from this tower, and always remember Benigna, who has done this for you, and who will ever be your friend."

At these words the palace and windows which the prince

had seen suddenly disappeared, and he found himself in the middle of a wild forest, more than three hundred miles from the tower in which the Brown King had confined him.

We must now leave him to see what became of the guards that were set to watch him, and of the Princess Trognon. The soldiers, wondering very much that their beloved prince did not call for his supper, entered his chamber, and not finding him, searched every corner of the tower, but all to no purpose. They almost died with fear of the anger of the Brown King, when he should know that his son had escaped, so they consulted together how they might deceive him. They resolved that one of their comrades should take his place, and go to bed, as though he were ill, not able to see any one. Afterward they intended to give out that he was dead, and by burying a great fagot instead of his Highness, impose upon the king, who, if he were to discover the truth, would put every man to death. So they began to arrange matters. They chose the smallest soldier in the guards, made up on him a hump back, and laid him on the bed like a sick person; the king was told that his son was ill. The king thought very little of this, and said that perhaps the illness would bring him to his senses, so he did not relax any of his orders, but was as severe as ever. No matter how much the guards begged for him, the king took no notice of his son's danger.

As to the Princess Trognon, she arrived in her small couch, about two feet high, which was placed in a litter. The Brown King went to meet her. When he found she was so deformed a creature, a cripple with skin which scaled like a fish, a nose broad and flat, a mouth reaching from ear to ear, he could not help saying: "Princess Trognon, you were very civil to despise my son; he is not good looking, it is true, but is not so frightful a person as yourself." "My lord," said she, "I cannot help the unkind things you say about me, thinking, perhaps, I may be led to love your son, the charming Torticoli, but I will never marry him, as I shall always value the title of Princess Trognon much more than that of Queen Torticoli."

The Brown King was very angry indeed at these words, and

said: "I shall keep my word with my son and your father. When you were at home he was your master; now you are here, I am become so."

She replied: "I did not come of my own accord, and shall always look upon you as my worst enemy if you try to use any power over me."

The king at this left her, more enraged than ever. He gave her an apartment in the palace and directed ladies to wait upon her, telling them to do all they could to induce her to change her mind and consent to do as he wished, as it would be in every way the best for her.

All this time the guards were afraid that their trick would be found out if they did not complete their plans, so they gave out that the prince was dead.

He was much grieved at the news, and wept bitterly. He said the death of his son was due to the Princess Trognon's refusal, and her treatment. He therefore commanded her to be shut up in the same tower where the prince had been confined.

The princess was much troubled at finding herself so suddenly made prisoner, and put into such a horrible and dismal place. She pleaded hard, but all to no purpose; the king's orders must be carried out. She then tried to get a letter taken to her father, asking him to come to help her, but no one would do anything for her. All her letters were given to the Brown King, and as she did not know of this, she kept on hoping from day to day. She made haste every morning into the gallery to look upon the pictures in the windows, and was very pleased indeed with those she saw there. Among others she found one with her own picture, showing her features and deformity, and wondered how her likeness could have been placed there. One picture pleased her very much: this was a shepherd of great charm and beauty, the sight of his freedom contrasting so greatly with her own condition that she wept bitterly for some little time.

On raising her head, to her great surprise she saw behind her a little old hag who was very much more deformed even

than she was herself. The old hag said to her: "Choose which you will, virtue or beauty; your sorrow seems so great that I feel for you. If you will be handsome you must be proud and stiff, and hated by many. If you remain as you are, you shall be wise, modest, and loved by everybody."

Trognon looked upon the witch that spoke to her and asked her if beauty and virtue could not go together.

"No," said the witch; "but as I desire to help you, you shall have the one or the other, but not both of them."

"If this be true," cried Trognon; "then I prefer my ugliness to beauty."

"How is this?" replied the witch; "would you rather frighten than charm all who see you?"

"Yes, madam," said the princess; "I would rather be the most miserable creature upon earth than not have virtue and goodness."

"I have brought you my yellow and white muff on purpose," said the witch; "blow on the yellow side of it and you shall become like that lovely shepherdess with whose picture you were so pleased, and be beloved by the shepherd who appeared so kingly and graceful. Blow on the white side, and you shall find yourself firmly fixed in the paths of virtue and goodness, in which you have so determined to walk."

"Let it be so, madam," said the princess; "I shall then be comforted amidst all the unkindness and rudeness I am likely to meet with, because I am so deformed."

Then the old witch gave her the magic muff of virtue and beauty. Trognon accepted it, blew on the white side, and thanked the witch, who immediately disappeared.

The princess was much rejoiced by the happy choice she had made, for in thinking it all over she received much comfort and peace. She felt that oftentimes beauty vanishes like a dream, but virtue and goodness are everlasting treasures and are of the real beauty which lasts longer than life itself. Meantime she hoped that her father would soon come with his soldiers to free her from her imprisonment.

She waited for his coming and longed to go up into the fort

of the tower to see if there were any signs; but she could not crawl up so high, so she crept into her chamber like a tortoise, or shall we say a snail? and asked her women to carry her up. When they had done so, she looked out of the window which faced the part of the country through which her father must come, if he came at all. She could see nothing; but as she was leaning against the wall, it so happened that the stones which Prince Torticoli had taken out and badly replaced, fell down, and with them the golden key, which fell at the princess's feet. She naturally took it up and examined it, wondering what it was there for. She thought a few moments and fancied that it might open the cupboard, but alas! she could not see a lock, but at last found the hole into which she put the key and the door flew open. What she saw amazed her. There were upward of four thousand drawers full of rare curiosities; there was the shutter, the box with the hand in it, and many other wonders. She trembled all over, not knowing what to do. She said, "I must go, for it seems like death to stay here with this poor hand." But suddenly she heard a voice saying, "Take heart, princess; your happiness depends upon what you may do."

"Alas!" replied the princess, "what can I do?"

The voice said: "Carry this hand with you into your chamber, hide it under your pillow, and when you see an eagle, give it to him at once."

Although the princess was a little frightened she noticed the softness of the voice that spoke and did not hesitate in obeying, first replacing the drawers in order as she had found them. Her guards were afraid that she would escape as the prince had done, so they soon rushed into her chamber to find her, and were much surprised to discover her in a place which they thought she could never have reached except by some magic power that they knew nothing of.

It was three days before Trognon saw anything; but the third night she heard a noise against her window, drew the curtain, and by the light of the moon saw an eagle hovering round the window; she got up as well as she was able and

crawling along the chamber, opened the casement. The eagle entered and flapped his wings with a great noise as a sign of joy. She gave him the hand at once; he took it with his claws, and immediately disappeared; but in his place there appeared a handsome youth with a crown upon his head holding a picture in his hand and dressed in a robe covered with diamonds. He spoke to her first, saying: "Princess, nearly two hundred years ago a wicked magician placed me here. He and I both loved the fairy Princess Benigna; I was beloved, and he became jealous; his arts were greater than mine, so he resolved to ruin me, and forbade me to see her any more. I paid no heed to his order, and the fairy herself was so angry at his conduct that she forbade him ever to come near her again, therefore the magician vowed that he would be revenged on us both. One day I was with the fairy looking at her portrait which she had just given me, when he came upon us suddenly, and at one blow struck off my hand with his sword. The fairy seeing what he had done fell down in a swoon, and at that instant I was changed into an eagle. I was, however, allowed to see her every day without approaching her, and often heard her sigh and talk of me in her sleep. I knew that after two hundred years a certain prince was to restore Benigna to life, and that a certain princess would give me my former shape again by delivering to me my hand; and this kind fairy who is anxious for your happiness and glory has so ordered it. It was she who so carefully locked up my hand in the cupboard in the fort; it was she who gave me the power to pay my acknowledgments to you. Ask what you will, my princess, and whatever you wish you shall have."

"Great king," replied the princess, standing motionless, "I have been so little used to such surprising sights that I can scarcely tell whether I am awake or asleep."

"Indeed, madam," said Trasimenes, "you are not dreaming; you shall really have your wish as soon as you let me know what it is."

"If I should ask for all I want, I am sure you could not possibly satisfy me; but I will ask for what I desire most, and that

is—Let my soul be as lovely as my body is ugly and deformed."

"Ah, princess," replied Trasimenes, "you charm me with the wisdom of your choice. In recompense for your virtue, your body shall become as lovely as your soul."

He then touched her with the fairy's picture, and a wonderful change took place—she was at once tall, straight, fair, and possessed a complexion whiter than milk. Her features became regular, her whole manner majestic and modest, delicate and agreeable. She was amazed, and cried out, "Is it myself? Is it possible?"

"Yes, madam," said Trasimenes, "it is yourself; the wise choice you have made of goodness and virtue has brought about this great change in your person, and I am overjoyed at being able to assist in bringing it about. Leave forever the name of Trognon and take that of Brilliant, which you richly deserve for the brightness of your graces and charms." He said this and at once vanished from sight, and the princess found herself under the shade of a covert of trees by the side of a little river in one of the most pleasant spots in the universe. She had as yet not seen herself since the great change in her person. The first time she beheld her charms was in the water of the river which was beautifully clear, and it was with wonder that she saw the marvelous change that had been wrought, and that she resembled the shepherdess whose picture she had so often admired in the gallery. Like the picture, she was dressed in a white gown trimmed with fine lace, the prettiest that ever was made; round her waist was a girdle of roses and jasmine; her hair was twined with flowers, a gilded crook lay by her side, and a flock of sheep grazed on the river's bank. A dog attended them, and both sheep and dog seemed to know her voice as that of their mistress.

She sat and thought about herself. She had been born, and lived, as the most deformed of human creatures, but she was a princess; now she was as bright as the morning star, but no more than a shepherdess, and in thinking thus she could not but be sensible of the loss of her rank and position.

After thinking thus she at length fell asleep. She had had very little rest all night, for though she had no knowledge of the matter she had traveled many, many miles, which had tired her. Her dog and sheep gathered round her, and watched her as she should have watched them. The sun, when it rose, could not hurt her, as the shade kept its piercing rays from her beauties, and the green grass on which she reclined seemed proud of the beautiful burden it bore.

The birds sang a tuneful melody and the breezes played with her garments, but soon the feathered choir ceased, and the breezes stayed fanning the air for fear the beloved should wake. A shepherd, seeking shelter from the heat of the sun, noticed the place where she lay and drew near; but when he saw the young shepherdess, Brilliant, he was astonished. Indeed, he saw that it was the very same person whose beauty had so charmed him with her picture in the windows of the gallery and the wonderful vellum book, for the shepherd was none other than Prince Nonesuch. An unknown power had kept him in this country, where he was admired and loved by all who saw him. His manner, his air, and his wit distinguished him as much among the shepherds as his birth would have done elsewhere. He looked on Brilliant with great pleasure and admiration, and knelt down by her side, but while he was thus engaged she awoke, and seeing him near her in shepherd's dress remembered that she had seen his picture in the tower.

"Lovely shepherdess," said Nonesuch, "what happy fortune brought you here? I feel already that no one will be more ready to pay homage to you than myself."

"Shepherd," replied the princess, "I do not require homage that is not my due; my only desire is to remain a simple shepherdess with my flock and my dog, breathing that solitude in which I delight more than all other enjoyments."

"How is it, fair shepherdess," said the prince, "that you come here to hide yourself from all mortals? Is it possible that you mean ill to us? At least let me be excepted, since I am the first who has offered service to you."

"I thank you very much for your kind offer," said the princess. "I beg you to lead me to the house of some kind shepherdess with whom I may spend my days in retirement and peace, for being a stranger to this land, I should be glad of a dwelling-place."

Nonesuch at once conducted her to a cottage so neat that nothing could be more pleasant. In it there lived a little old woman, who very seldom went out, being so old that she could hardly walk.

"Here," said Nonesuch, presenting Brilliant, "here is a damsel, whose looks are enough to make you feel young again."

The old woman embraced her, and bade her welcome, saying she was sorry she had no better lodging for her, but she would make it up by friendship and love.

To this Brilliant replied: "I did not think to find so much kindness here; I assure you, mother, I am very glad indeed that I have met with you, and that I shall have the pleasure of your company. Pray tell me your name," said she, addressing the shepherd, "that I may know to whom I am indebted for this kindness in leading me hither."

"I am called Nonesuch," replied the prince, "by my companions."

The old woman, turning to the shepherdess, asked what her name was, and she replied, "Brilliant."

This name pleased the old woman exceedingly and, thinking the pretty creature must be hungry, she presented her with some brown bread and cream in a clean earthen dish, some new-laid eggs, new butter and cheese.

Nonesuch ran to his hut and brought her some nuts, cherries, and other fruits, also a few fine flowers. He asked leave to dine with her and she could not well refuse his request, so they all had a very pleasant time.

When they parted she thought often of him and he of her. He visited her every day and drove her flock to the same pasture where his own grazed. He sang songs, played his flute, and tuned his pipe so as to tempt her to dance, which

she did with so much grace that he could not but admire her.

Both of them thought often of all the adventures they had gone through. Nonesuch was always seeking her so soon as he missed her, but she generally did her best to avoid him.

She was angry with herself for loving Nonesuch. "What," said she, "not only have I the misfortune to love, but to love a wretched shepherd? I have preferred virtue to beauty. Heaven, to reward my choice, has made me beautiful; and yet how miserable I feel. If it were not for this beauty the shepherd from whom I fly would not take such pains to please me, and I should then have no need to be ashamed of the tenderness I feel for him." Yet she gave him all the trouble she could, so that he gave himself up to sorrow and despair.

He wished very much to let Brilliant know the dignity of his birth; but then he thought she might not believe him, and if she were to ask a proof of what he said, he felt he had none to give.

"How unfortunate I am," said he to himself; "although I used to be deformed and frightful in appearance, I was heir to a crown and a kingdom, which sometimes hides all defects; but now I cannot show myself to my father or his subjects, for neither of them would know or own me, and all the good fairy Benigna has done for me in taking away my name and deformity is to make a shepherd of me and to bring me in connection with a shepherdess who cannot endure me and who shuns me at every turn. Oh, that the powers would be kinder to me or else make me as deformed and ill-looking as I was before."

Such were the thoughts of these two, which they kept to themselves; and so it continued for some time.

It happened one day that Brilliant was hurrying away so that the shepherd should not speak to her, when Nonesuch thought of a plan which he at once carried out. He took a little lamb, dressed it up with flowers and placed a collar round its neck. He then put on a rose-colored coat covered with

lace; he adorned his crook with ribbons and placed a silken scrip at his side and started forth. He found Brilliant sitting on a bank by the river, which ran through the thickest part of the wood. Her sheep were feeding round her and she herself seemed to be deeply thinking. He approached very quietly, presented the little lamb to her and looked at her.

"What have I done to you, fair shepherdess, that you should always run away when I approach you? Are not my actions and words full of respect and warmth? Alas! it must be true that you love elsewhere and that you think always of your absent one."

"It is not so," cried Brilliant, "but Heaven decrees that we should part."

Having said this, away she ran. The prince followed, but grief overcame him and he stumbled and fell against a tree. Brilliant could not help turning to see if he followed her. She saw him fall down, and her heart was sad indeed.

When she escaped from the wood she lifted up her eyes and cried out: "O Virtue! O Glory! O Greatness! O Destiny! I sacrifice my quiet to you. O Trasimenes! I renounce my fatal beauty. Let me be as ugly and deformed as ever."

Having thus cried out against her ill-fortune, she wondered whether she ought to go back and help Nonesuch or fly farther from him. Love would have had her return to him, but her other thoughts triumphed, and she resolved never to see him any more.

Since she had come into this country she had heard of a famous magician who lived in a castle which he had built on the borders of an island, where he resided with his sister. Nothing was so much talked about as their great skill. They did miracles every day.

Brilliant thought that she should never be able to forget her dear shepherd without the help of some magic power, and without saying a word to the kind old woman with whom she lived, and who loved her as though she were her own daughter, so full of trouble was she that she started at once to go to the castle. She stopped neither night nor day, she neither ate nor

drank, so eager was she to get to the place and be cured of her tenderness.

At last she found the magician's castle and entered it without any trouble. She crossed several courts, where the grass was so high, and where there were so many thorns and briers that she scratched her hands in several places in making her way through them. The first room she came to was a hall, into which the light only came through a small hole. It was hung with bats' wings instead of tapestry. Twelve cats were tied up with their heads downward from the ceiling, and kept up such a growling that it was hardly bearable. Twelve mice were fastened to a long table by their tails, each of them with a piece of cheese before it, but at such a distance that they could not reach it. Thus the cats saw the mice, and the mice the cheese, without being able to touch what they wanted, although they were almost starving.

The princess was thinking of the dreadful fate of these animals when the magician came to her dressed in a long black robe; he had a crocodile on his head, which served him instead of a cap, and never man had such a head-dress before.

In one hand he had a pair of spectacles; in the other a whip of twenty long snakes, all alive, and you can imagine how frightened the poor princess must have been at the magician's dreadful appearance. She began to be sorry that she had lost her shepherd, her flock and her dog, and to think what she should do to escape this dreadful monster.

She ran to the door, but felt herself entangled in a net of cobwebs, and as fast as she cleared herself of one, she was caught in another, and so on, till the number was very great. This made her exceedingly tired, she could not take the cobwebs off her head and arms, so she lay down on the ground to rest and she was scarcely down before she felt the thorns and briers pricking her. The magician seeing what trouble she was in, appeared much amused, for he laughed heartily. Presently he called to her and said, "Thou wilt never be able to get free so long as thou livest; I have taken a great liking for thee; if thou wilt marry me I will give thee the twelve cats thou seest

hanging up there to do what thou wilt with them, as also the twelve mice. The cats are so many princes, and the mice so many princesses, who were all liked by me, yet none of them would love me. The princes were my rivals, and all of them much happier than I; so I tempted them to come hither, and I caught them in my snares and changed them into cats and mice. The truth now is that they hate one another as much as they before loved, and my revenge is complete."

"Ah! my lord," replied Brilliant, "please turn me into a mouse. I deserve it quite as much as these poor princesses."

"How now!" quoth the magician. "You silly little maid, will you not love me, then?"

"No," said the princess, "I have resolved never to love."

"Have a care what thou sayest," said the old fellow, "for thou mayest bitterly repent it."

"No matter about that," replied the princess, "such is my resolve."

"Is that true?" said the magician. "Thou shalt not be a mouse then, but because of the greenness of thy youth, and that thou art light and airy, thou shalt live in meadows as thou didst before, and be called Grasshopper." He then touched her and she became the prettiest little grasshopper in the world; and enjoying her liberty, at once hopped into the garden.

As soon as she was alone she burst into tears. "Ah!" said she, "would I had remained a cripple and deformed. Ah! Trasimenes, where are thy fair promises now? What is become of the beauty which was so carefully kept for me above two hundred years? It is more short-lived than the flowers of spring; what has it ended in? A green garment, a strange shape, neither fish, bones nor blood. Ah! woe is me. A crown would have hidden all my deformity, and if I had only remained a shepherdess I should at least have been happy. What am I now? A grasshopper made to chirp all day and night though my heart is breaking, and I could forever weep." Thus spoke Grasshopper in her new form, frisking among the flowers and grass which grew on the river banks.

During all this time poor Nonesuch was lamenting the loss of his beloved shepherdess, for the way in which she had left him troubled him greatly, though he had not the strength to follow her. He fell into a dreamy state and remained insensible to everything, and was like one without life as he lay at the foot of the tree where Brilliant saw him fall. Here he remained for some time until the freshness of some unknown power restored him. He did not dare to go out the next day. He thought and thought, and hoped all things would turn out well, but his grief was very great when, going to see Brilliant at the hut of the old woman, he found she had not been at home since he last saw her. He wandered about the fields in search of her, going far and wide, but all to no purpose; he rested himself on the river bank, and thought he must really end his troubles with his life. While he was thus sitting he saw approaching a little old woman, dressed in a ruff, with a high-crowned hat on, looking very venerable.

"Son," said she, "I have heard your doleful complaints, please tell me what is the cause."

"Ah! mother," replied the prince, "I mourn the loss of a lovely shepherdess who has quite disappeared, and I know not what has become of her; I can get no news of her from any one."

"Go," said she, "to yonder castle, and I think you may be able to hear something of her."

It was of course the castle of the magician that the old woman meant, so Nonesuch thanked her and at once started on his journey.

He met with no hindrance until he came to the wood; here he thought he saw his shepherdess, and ran after her crying out: "Stop! Brilliant, stop! and hear what I have to say."

But the fairy flew away and he followed, and the chase was kept up the whole of the night. When it was dark, he saw the lights of the castle. He thought that perhaps she might be within, so he made greater haste, entered the courtyard, mounted the staircase, and in the grand hall saw an old witch, very lean and haggard; her eyes were dim, her arms like laths,

her fingers like bobbins and her skin was like black fish-skin. She was patched and painted, covered with green ribbons, with a brocaded gown, and a crown on her head which was covered over with diamonds.

"Prince," said she, "you have come to a place where I have for a long time wished to see you. Think no more of your little shepherdess; you ought to remember your position. Now I am Queen of Meteors, I wish you well, and if you will only love me, I can do a great deal for you."

"Love you, madam?" replied the prince. "Is it in my power to love whom I please? No, I can never be unfaithful; and even if I could, it would not be in favor of your ladyship; it would be better for you to find some one among your own meteors; love the air, or the winds, but leave mankind in peace."

The fairy was very proud and angry; she struck her wand against the ground twice, and in an instant the hall was full of monsters, with whom the young prince was bidden to fight. Some of them seemed to have two heads, and several arms; they took all manner of shapes, such as lions with human faces, tigers, apes, and flying serpents.

Nonesuch had nothing in his hand to defend himself with but his crook and a little spear, which he had thought might be of use during his journey.

Before the monsters began the attack the fairy again asked him if he would love her.

He replied: "No, my heart and soul are devoted to my fair shepherdess."

The old hag thought of another device: she made Brilliant appear. "See," said she, "there is thy fair shepherdess at the end of the gallery; if you still refuse she shall be torn to pieces by the tigers before thy face."

"Ah! madam," cried the prince, throwing himself at her feet, "whatever you do, spare her life; take mine, if you will, but do no harm to her."

"I do not want thy life," said she; "it is thy love I desire."

While they were thus talking, the prince thought he heard

his dear shepherdess's voice saying in a mournful tone: "Will you, then, let me be devoured? If you love me, do what the queen desires."

The poor prince knew not what to do in the midst of his troubles.

He called out: "O Benigna, have you forsaken me? Come and help me in my distress."

Having said this he heard a voice in the air, which said distinctly:

> "Destiny will work its way,
> All things must its laws obey;
> Prince, be faithful to thy vow,
> Love, and seek the Golden Bough."

The old fairy, who quite believed she would be victorious by means of so many helpers, was very angry to find herself checked by a superior power.

The protection of the fairy Benigna was a hindrance in her way, and she could not remove it.

"Benigna," said she, "begone from my sight. Unhappy prince, thou shalt henceforth be a cricket and be always fond of heat and fire."

In an instant the beautiful and graceful Prince Nonesuch became a little black cricket, who would have burned himself in the first fire he came to had he not remembered the friendly voice which he had heard in the air.

"Let us search for the Golden Bough," said he; "perhaps it will un-cricket me; and if I find my dear shepherdess here, how happy shall I be."

The Cricket now made his way as fast as he could out of the fatal palace; he did not know where to go, so recommended himself to the cave of the beautiful fairy Benigna. He departed without noise, for your cricket fears neither robbers nor ill adventures on the road. His first resting-place was in a hollow tree, where he found a grasshopper very melancholy; not a chirp could be got out of her.

The Cricket did not dream who the Grasshopper was, and

said to her, not expecting an answer, "Where are you going, comrade Grasshopper?"

The Cricket was much surprised to hear her reply.

"How is this? Can you speak?" said he.

"And can you?" said the Grasshopper. "Why should we not, as well as you crickets?"

"I may talk," said the Cricket, "because I am a man."

"And by the same rule," said Grasshopper, "I may also speak, for I am a maiden—but where are you going? I should be glad, if it is the same way, to go with you."

"I have just heard a voice in the air saying:

'Be thou faithful to thy vow,
Go, and seek the Golden Bough.'

I suppose it was meant for me, so I set out to seek it, although I do not know in what direction."

At this point they saw two mice running up to them as fast as they could go. They leaped into the hole of the tree and almost stifled the two comrades, Cricket and Grasshopper, who both crept as well as they could into a corner.

"Friend Mouse, I have a pain in my side with running so fast; how is your Royal Highness?"

"I have lost part of my tail," replied the smaller Mouse; "I was obliged to leave it, or I should have been still fastened to the magician's table, but how happy I am that I have escaped from his dreadful palace! I am a little afraid of cats and traps, however."

"I hope the good fairies will save you from them," said the larger Mouse. "I shall long heartily to arrive at the Golden Bough."

"Do you know the way, then?" said her Mousical Highness.

"As well as I do to my own house," said the other. "It is a wonderful bough; one of its leaves is enough to make a person rich for life; it helps people to money; it uncharms them; it makes them handsome, and keeps them always young."

The Grasshopper, seeing how matters stood, spoke to their Highnesses.

"Here is a poor honest Cricket and myself; we shall be very proud of your company, ladies, for we, as well as you, are seeking the Golden Bough."

Upon this many kind and gracious things were said, for the mice were princesses that had made their escape from the magician's table to which they were fastened, and as to the Cricket and Grasshopper, we already know who they were.

They were all awake early the next morning, and set out very quietly, being afraid any one should hear them chirp or talk, for if caught they would have been snapped up and put in a cage. So hopping and springing along they came to the place where grew the Golden Bough. It was planted in the middle of a garden full of wonders. Instead of gravel the paths were made of pearls as big as peas; the roses were all diamonds, and the leaves emeralds; the blossoms of the pomegranates were various jewels; the marigolds topazes, the violets sapphires, the tulips amethysts and opals; in fact, the brilliancy of these fairy flowers was such that they outshone the sun itself.

It was here that the Golden Bough grew, the same that Prince Nonesuch received from the Eagle, with which he had touched the fairy Benigna and disenchanted her.

It had grown as high as the tallest tree, and was laden with rubies in the shape of cherries. As soon as the Cricket and the Grasshopper and the two Mice approached it they received their natural shapes. Oh, joy! Oh, transport, which cannot be written! The prince, when he saw the fair shepherdess, threw himself at her feet, and was about to say how delighted he was, when Queen Benigna and King Trasimenes appeared in great pomp and with a great number of attendants; four cupids, with their bows at their sides and their quivers on their shoulders, held a small canopy of gold and blue brocade over the king and queen, and two graces marched on each side with two crowns in their hands.

"Come hither, ye amiable lovers," said the queen, extending

her hands; "receive from me the crown of goodness which your birth and worth so well deserve. Your sufferings now shall change to pleasures."

"Princess Brilliant," said she, "this shepherd whom you have so often run away from is the same prince that your father and his father desired you to accept, for he did not die in the tower; take him and leave the care of your peace and happiness to me." The princess, overjoyed at this wonderful news, threw herself about Benigna's neck, and showed by the tears which ran down her cheeks how deeply she felt. Nonesuch, bending one knee to the ground, kissed the good fairy's hands, and said with great emotion many things, hardly knowing how to express his gratitude.

Trasimenes tried to help him as much as he could, and Benigna in a few words told them that it was she herself who had proposed to Trognon to blow on the yellow and white muff; that she had also taken the shape of the old shepherd woman to entertain the princess at her hut, and that she had showed the prince where the shepherdess had gone.

"Indeed," said she, "you have both suffered a great deal, and I would have prevented it had it been in my power; but the pleasures of love must be sometimes bought, and the joy that follows makes up for all the sorrow, causing the joy to be all the greater."

Then was heard on every side strains of the sweetest music. The cupids crowned the two young lovers, and the occasion was celebrated with the great magnificence that became the Court of Benigna.

The two princesses, who had accompanied them in the shape of mice, begged the good fairy to deliver the unhappy cats and mice also from the magician's power.

"This is too happy a day," Benigna replied, "to deny you anything," and saying this, she struck the Golden Bough three times, upon which all those who had been confined by the magician's power appeared in their proper forms. The fairy further divided the treasures of the fort in the tower among them, a present in those days worth as much as ten kingdoms.

Benigna and Trasimenes crowned their generosity by saying that the palace, the garden, and the Golden Bough should for the future belong to King Nonesuch and Queen Brilliant. A hundred other kings were to be his subjects and a hundred kingdoms were dependent upon that which the two good fairies bestowed on the two happy lovers, so that their future bade fair to be as joyful and bright as their past had been troubled and sorrowful.

# *The Nixy*

THERE was once upon a time a miller who was very well off and had as much money and as many goods as he knew what to do with. But sorrow comes in the night, and the miller all of a sudden became so poor that at last he could hardly call the mill in which he sat his own. He wandered about all day full of despair and misery, and when he lay down at even he could get no rest, but lay awake all night sunk in sorrowful thoughts.

One morning he rose up before dawn and went outside, for he thought his heart would be lighter in the open air. As he wandered up and down on the banks of the mill-pond he heard a rustling in the water, and when he looked near he saw a white woman rising up from the waves.

He realized at once that this could be none other than the nixy of the mill-pond, and in his terror he didn't know whether he should fly away or remain where he was. While he hesitated the nixy spoke, called him by his name, and asked him why he was so sad.

When the miller heard how friendly her tone was, he plucked up heart and told her how rich and prosperous he had been all his life up till now, when he didn't know what he was to do for want and misery.

Then the nixy spoke comforting words to him, and promised that she would make him richer and more prosperous than he had ever been in his life before, if he would give her in return the youngest thing in his house.

The miller thought she must mean one of his puppies or kittens, so promised the nixy at once what she asked and returned to his mill full of hope. On the threshold he was

greeted by a servant with the news that his wife had just given birth to a boy.

The poor miller was much horrified by these tidings, and went in to his wife with a heavy heart to tell her and his relations of the fatal bargain he had just struck with the nixy. "I would gladly give up all the good fortune she promised me," he said, "if I could only save my child." But no one could think of any advice to give him, beyond taking care that the child never went near the mill-pond.

So the boy throve and grew big, and in the mean time all prospered with the miller, and in a few years he was richer than he had ever been before. But all the same he did not enjoy his good fortune, for he could not forget his compact with the nixy, and he knew that sooner or later she would demand his fulfilment of it. But year after year went by, and the boy grew up and became a great hunter, and the lord of the land took him into his service, for he was as smart and bold a hunter as you would wish to see. In a short time he married a pretty young wife and lived with her in great peace and happiness.

One day when he was out hunting a hare sprang up at his feet and ran for some way in front of him in the open field. The hunter pursued it hotly for some time and at last shot it dead. Then he proceeded to skin it, never noticing that he was close to the mill-pond, which from childhood up he had been taught to avoid. He soon finished the skinning and went to the water to wash the blood off his hands. He had hardly dipped them in the pond when the nixy rose up in the pool, and seizing him in her wet arms she dragged him down with her under the waves.

When the hunter did not come home in the evening his wife grew very anxious, and when his game-bag was found close to the mill-pond she guessed at once what had befallen him. She was nearly beside herself with grief, and roamed round and round the pond calling on her husband without ceasing. At last, worn out with sorrow and fatigue, she fell asleep and dreamed that she was wandering along a

flowery meadow, when she came to a hut where she found an old witch, who promised to restore her husband to her.

When she awoke next morning she determined to set out and find the witch; so she wandered on for many a day, and at last she reached the flowery meadow and found the hut where the old witch lived. The poor wife told her all that had happened and how she had been told in a dream of the witch's power to help her.

The witch counseled her to go to the pond the first time there was a full moon, and to comb her black hair with a golden comb, and then to place the comb on the bank. The hunter's wife gave the witch a handsome present, thanked her heartily, and returned home.

Time dragged heavily till the time of the full moon, but it passed at last, and as soon as it rose the young wife went to the pond, combed her black hair with a golden comb, and when she had finished placed the comb on the bank; then she watched the water impatiently. Soon she heard a rushing sound, and a big wave rose suddenly and swept the comb off the bank, and a minute after the head of her husband rose from the pond and gazed sadly at her. But immediately another wave came, and the head sank back into the water without having said a word. The pond lay still and motionless, glittering in the moonshine, and the hunter's wife was not a bit better off than she had been before.

In despair she wandered about for days and nights, and at last, worn out by fatigue, she sank once more into a deep sleep and dreamed exactly the same dream about the old witch. So next morning she went again to the flowery meadow, sought the witch in her hut, and told her of her grief. The old woman counseled her to go to the mill-pond the next full moon and play upon a golden flute, and then to lay the flute on the bank.

As soon as the next moon was full the hunter's wife went to the mill-pond, played on a golden flute, and when she had finished placed it on the bank. Then a rushing sound was heard and a wave swept the flute off the bank, and soon the

head of the hunter appeared and rose up higher and higher till he was half out of the water. Then he gazed sadly at his wife and stretched out his arms toward her. But another rushing wave arose and dragged him under once more. The hunter's wife, who had stood on the bank full of joy and hope, sank into despair when she saw her husband snatched away again before her eyes.

But for her comfort she dreamed the same dream a third time, and betook herself once more to the old witch's hut in the flowery meadow. This time the old woman told her to go the next full moon to the mill-pond and to spin there with a golden spinning-wheel, and then to leave the spinning-wheel on the bank.

The hunter's wife did as she was advised, and the first night the moon was full she sat and spun with a golden spinning-wheel, and then left the wheel on the bank. In a few minutes a rushing sound was heard in the waters and a wave swept the spinning-wheel from the bank. Immediately the head of the hunter rose up from the pond, getting higher and higher each moment, till at length he stepped onto the bank and fell on his wife's neck.

But the waters of the pond rose up suddenly, overflowed the bank where the couple stood, and dragged them under the flood. In her despair the young wife called on the old witch to help her, and in a moment the hunter was turned into a frog and his wife into a toad. But they were not able to remain together, for the water tore them apart, and when the flood was over they both resumed their own shapes again, but the hunter and the hunter's wife found themselves each in a strange country, and neither knew what had become of the other.

The hunter determined to become a shepherd, and his wife too became a shepherdess. So they herded their sheep for many years in solitude and sadness.

Now, it happened once that the shepherd came to the country where the shepherdess lived. The neighborhood pleased him, and he saw that the pasture was rich and suitable for

his flocks. So he brought his sheep there and herded them as before. The shepherd and shepherdess became great friends, but they did not recognize each other in the least.

But one evening when the moon was full they sat together watching their flocks, and the shepherd played upon his flute. Then the shepherdess thought of that evening when she had sat at the full moon by the mill-pond and had played on the golden flute; the recollection was too much for her and she burst into tears. The shepherd asked her why she was crying and left her no peace till she told him all her story. Then the scales fell from the shepherd's eyes, and he recognized his wife and she him. So they returned joyfully to their own home and lived in peace and happiness ever after.

# *The Enchanted Pig*

ONCE upon a time there lived a king who had three daughters. Now it happened that he had to go out to battle, so he called his daughters and said to them:

"My dear children, I am obliged to go to the wars. The enemy is approaching us with a large army. It is a great grief to me to leave you all. During my absence take care of yourselves and be good girls; behave well and look after everything in the house. You may walk in the garden, and you may go into all the rooms in the palace, except the room at the back in the right-hand corner; into that you must not enter, for harm would befall you."

"You may keep your mind easy, father," they replied. "We have never been disobedient to you. Go in peace, and may Heaven give you a glorious victory!"

When everything was ready for his departure, the king gave them the keys of all the rooms and reminded them once more of what he had said. His daughters kissed his hands with tears in their eyes and wished him prosperity, and he gave the eldest the keys.

Now when the girls found themselves alone they felt so sad and dull that they did not know what to do. So, to pass the time, they decided to work for part of the day, to read for part of the day, and to enjoy themselves in the garden for part of the day. As long as they did this all went well with them. But this happy state of things did not last long. Every day they grew more and more curious, and you will see what the end of that was.

"Sisters," said the eldest princess, "all day long we sew, spin, and read. We have been several days quite alone, and

there is no corner of the garden that we have not explored. We have been in all the rooms of our father's palace, and have admired the rich and beautiful furniture: why should not we go into the room that our father forbade us to enter?"

"Sister," said the youngest, "I cannot think how you can tempt us to break our father's command. When he told us not to go into that room he must have known what he was saying, and have had a good reason for saying it."

"Surely the sky won't fall about our heads if we do go in," said the second princess. "Dragons and such like monsters that would devour us will not be hidden in the room. And how will our father ever find out that we have gone in?"

While they were speaking thus, encouraging each other, they had reached the room; the eldest fitted the key into the lock, and snap! the door stood open.

The three girls entered, and what do you think they saw?

The room was quite empty, and without any ornament, but in the middle stood a large table, with a gorgeous cloth, and on it lay a big open book.

Now the princesses were curious to know what was written in the book, especially the eldest, and this is what she read:

"The eldest daughter of this king will marry a prince from the East."

Then the second girl stepped forward, and turning over the page she read:

"The second daughter of this king will marry a prince from the West."

The girls were delighted, and laughed and teased each other.

But the youngest princess did not want to go near the table or to open the book. Her elder sisters, however, left her no peace, and will she, nill she, they dragged her up to the table, and in fear and trembling she turned over the page and read:

"The youngest daughter of this king will be married to a pig from the North."

Now if a thunderbolt had fallen upon her from heaven it would not have frightened her more.

She almost died of misery, and if her sisters had not held

her up, she would have sunk to the ground and cut her head open.

When she came out of the fainting fit into which she had fallen in her terror, her sisters tried to comfort her, saying:

"How can you believe such nonsense? When did it ever happen that a king's daughter married a pig?"

"What a baby you are!" said the other sister; "has not our father enough soldiers to protect you, even if the disgusting creature did come to woo you?"

The youngest princess would fain have let herself be convinced by her sisters' words, and have believed what they said, but her heart was heavy. Her thoughts kept turning to the book, in which stood written that great happiness waited her sisters, but that a fate was in store for her such as had never before been known in the world.

Besides, the thought weighed on her heart that she had been guilty of disobeying her father. She began to get quite ill, and in a few days she was so changed that it was difficult to recognize her; formerly she had been rosy and merry, now she was pale and nothing gave her any pleasure. She gave up playing with her sisters in the garden, ceased to gather flowers to put in her hair, and never sang when they sat together at their spinning and sewing.

In the mean time the king won a great victory, and having completely defeated and driven off the enemy, he hurried home to his daughters, to whom his thoughts had constantly turned. Every one went out to meet him with cymbals and fifes and drums, and there was great rejoicing over his victorious return. The king's first act on reaching home was to thank Heaven for the victory he had gained over the enemies who had risen against him. He then entered his palace, and the three princesses stepped forward to meet him. His joy was great when he saw that they were all well, for the youngest did her best not to appear sad.

In spite of this, however, it was not long before the king noticed that his third daughter was getting very thin and sad-looking. And all of a sudden he felt as if a hot iron were en-

tering his soul, for it flashed through his mind that she had disobeyed his word. He felt sure he was right; but to be quite certain he called his daughters to him, questioned them, and ordered them to speak the truth. They confessed everything, but took good care not to say which had led the other two into temptation.

The king was so distressed when he heard it that he was almost overcome by grief. But he took heart and tried to comfort his daughters, who looked frightened to death. He saw that what had happened had happened, and that a thousand words would not alter matters by a hair's-breadth.

Well, these events had almost been forgotten when one fine day a prince from the East appeared at the court and asked the king for the hand of his eldest daughter. The king gladly gave his consent. A great wedding banquet was prepared, and after three days of feasting the happy pair was accompanied to the frontier with much ceremony and rejoicing.

After some time the same thing befell the second daughter, who was wooed and won by a prince from the West.

Now when the young princess saw that everything fell out exactly as had been written in the book, she grew very sad. She refused to eat, and would not put on her fine clothes nor go out walking, and declared that she would rather die than become a laughing-stock to the world. But the king would not allow her to do anything so wrong, and he comforted her in all possible ways.

So the time passed, till lo and behold! one fine day an enormous pig from the North walked into the palace, and going straight up to the king said: "Hail! oh, king. May your life be as prosperous and bright as sunrise on a clear day!"

"I am glad to see you well, friend," answered the king, "but what wind has brought you hither?"

"I come a-wooing," replied the pig.

Now the king was astonished to hear so fine a speech from a pig, and at once it occurred to him that something strange was the matter. He would gladly have turned the pig's thoughts in another direction, as he did not wish to give him

the princess for a wife; but when he heard that the court and the whole street were full of all the pigs in the world he saw that there was no escape, and that he must give his consent. The pig was not satisfied with mere promises, but insisted that the wedding should take place within a week, and would not go away till the king had sworn a royal oath upon it.

The king then sent for his daughter, and advised her to submit to fate, as there was nothing else to be done. And he added:

"My child, the words and whole behavior of this pig are quite unlike those of other pigs. I do not myself believe that he always was a pig. Depend upon it some magic or witchcraft has been at work. Obey him, and do everything that he wishes, and I feel sure that Heaven will shortly send you release."

"If you wish me to do this, dear father, I will do it," replied the girl.

In the mean time the wedding-day drew near. After the marriage, the pig and his bride set out for his home in one of the royal carriages. On the way they passed a great bog, and the pig ordered the carriage to stop, and got out and rolled about in the mire till he was covered with mud from head to foot; then he got back into the carriage and told his wife to kiss him. What was the poor girl to do? She bethought herself of her father's words, and, pulling out her pocket handkerchief, she gently wiped the pig's snout and kissed it.

By the time they reached the pig's dwelling, which stood in a thick wood, it was quite dark. They sat down quietly for a little, as they were tired after their drive; then they had supper together, and lay down to rest. During the night the princess noticed that the pig had changed into a man. She was not a little surprised, but remembering her father's words, she took courage, determined to wait and see what would happen.

And now she noticed that every night the pig became a man, and every morning he was changed into a pig before she awoke. This happened several nights running, and the princess could not understand it at all. Clearly her husband must be be-

witched. In time she grew quite fond of him, he was so kind and gentle.

One fine day as she was sitting alone she saw an old witch go past. She felt quite excited, as it was so long since she had seen a human being, and she called out to the old woman to come and talk to her. Among other things the witch told her that she understood all magic arts and that she could foretell the future, and knew the healing powers of herbs and plants.

"I shall be grateful to you all my life, old dame," said the princess, "if you will tell me what is the matter with my husband. Why is he a pig by day and a human being by night?"

"I was just going to tell you that one thing, my dear, to show you what a good fortune-teller I am. If you like, I will give you an herb to break the spell."

"If you will only give it to me," said the princess, "I will give you anything you choose to ask for, for I cannot bear to see him in this state."

"Here, then, my dear child," said the witch, "take this thread, but do not let him know about it, for if he did it would lose its healing power. At night, when he is asleep, you must get up very quietly, and fasten the thread round his left foot as firmly as possible; and you will see in the morning he will not have changed back into a pig, but will still be a man. I do not want any reward. I shall be sufficiently repaid by knowing that you are happy. It almost breaks my heart to think of all you have suffered, and I only wish I had known it sooner, as I should have come to your rescue at once."

When the old witch had gone away the princess hid the thread very carefully, and at night she got up quietly, and with a beating heart she bound the thread round her husband's foot. Just as she was pulling the knot tight there was a crack, and the thread broke, for it was rotten.

Her husband awoke with a start, and said to her: "Unhappy woman, what have you done? Three days more and this unholy spell would have fallen from me, and now, who

knows how long I may have to go about in this disgusting shape? I must leave you at once, and we shall not meet again until you have worn out three pairs of iron shoes and blunted a steel staff in your search for me." So saying he disappeared.

Now, when the princess was left alone she began to weep and moan in a way that was pitiful to hear; but when she saw that her tears and groans did her no good, she got up, determined to go wherever fate should lead her.

On reaching a town, the first thing she did was to order three pairs of iron sandals and a steel staff, and having made these preparations for her journey, she set out in search of her husband. On and on she wandered over nine seas and across nine continents; through forests with trees whose stems were as thick as beer-barrels; stumbling and knocking herself against the fallen branches, then picking herself up and going on; the boughs of the trees hit her face, and the shrubs tore her hands, but on she went, and never looked back. At last, wearied with her long journey and worn out and overcome with sorrow, but still with hope at her heart, she reached a house.

Now who do you think lived there? The moon.

The princess knocked at the door, and begged to be let in that she might rest a little. The mother of the moon, when she saw her sad plight, felt a great pity for her, and took her in and nursed and tended her. And while she was here a little baby came to the poor princess.

One day the mother of the moon asked her:

"How was it possible for you, a mortal, to get hither to the house of the moon?"

Then the princess told her all that happened to her, and added: "I shall always be thankful to Heaven for leading me hither, and grateful to you that you took pity on me and on my baby, and did not leave us to die. Now I beg one last favor of you; can your daughter, the moon, tell me where my husband is?"

"She cannot tell you that, my child" replied the goddess,

"but if you will travel toward the east until you reach the dwelling of the sun, he may be able to tell you something."

Then she gave the princess a roast chicken to eat, and warned her to be very careful not to lose any of the bones, because they might be of great use to her.

When the princess had thanked her once more for her hospitality and for her good advice, and had thrown away one pair of shoes that were worn out, and had put on a second pair, she tied up the chicken bones in a bundle, and taking her baby in her arms and her staff in her hand, she set out once more on her wanderings.

On and on and on she went across bare sandy deserts, where the roads were so heavy that for every two steps that she took forward she fell back one; but she struggled on till she had passed these dreary plains; next she crossed high rocky mountains, jumping from crag to crag and from peak to peak. Sometimes she would rest for a little on a mountain, and then start afresh, always farther and farther on. She had to cross swamps and to scale mountain peaks covered with flints, so that her feet and knees and elbows were all torn and bleeding, and sometimes she came to a precipice across which she could not jump, and she had to crawl round on hands and knees, helping herself along with her staff. At length, wearied to death, she reached the palace in which the sun lived. She knocked and begged for admission. The mother of the sun opened the door, and was astonished at beholding a mortal from the distant earthly shores, and wept with pity when she heard of all she had suffered. Then, having promised to ask her son about the princess' husband, she hid her in the cellar, so that the sun might notice nothing on his return home, for he was always in a bad temper when he came in at night.

The next day the princess feared that things would not go well with her, for the sun had noticed that some one from the other world had been in the palace. But his mother had soothed him with soft words, assuring him that this was not so. So the princess took heart when she saw how kindly she was treated, and asked:

"But how in the world is it possible for the sun to be angry? He is so beautiful and so good to mortals."

"This is how it happens," replied the sun's mother. "In the morning when he stands at the gates of paradise he is happy, and smiles on the whole world, but during the day he gets cross, because he sees all the evil deeds of men, and that is why his heat becomes so scorching; but in the evening he is both sad and angry, for he stands at the gates of death; that is his usual course. From there he comes back here."

She then told the princess that she had asked about her husband, but that her son had replied that he knew nothing about him, and that her only hope was to go and inquire of the wind.

Before the princess left, the mother of the sun gave her a roast chicken to eat, and advised her to take great care of the bones, which she did, wrapping them up in a bundle. She then threw away her second pair of shoes, which were quite worn out, and with her child on her arm and her staff in her hand, she set forth on her way to the wind.

In these wanderings she met with even greater difficulties than before, for she came upon one mountain of flints after another, out of which tongues of fire would flame up; she passed through woods which had never been trodden by human foot, and had to cross fields of ice and avalanches of snow. The poor woman nearly died of these hardships, but she kept a brave heart, and at length she reached an enormous cave in the side of a mountain. This was where the wind lived. There was a little door in the railing in front of the cave, and here the princess knocked and begged for admission. The mother of the wind had pity on her and took her in, that she might rest a little. Here too she was hidden away, so that the wind might not notice her.

The next morning the mother of the wind told her that her husband was living in a thick wood, so thick that no ax had been able to cut a way through it; here he had built himself a sort of house by placing trunks of trees together and

fastening them with withes, and here he lived alone, shunning human kind.

After the mother of the wind had given the princess a chicken to eat, and had warned her to take care of the bones, she advised her to go by the Milky Way, which at night lies across the sky, and to wander on till she reached her goal.

Having thanked the old woman with tears in her eyes for her hospitality, and for the good news she had given her, the princess set out on her journey and rested neither night nor day, so great was her longing to see her husband again. On and on she walked until her last pair of shoes fell in pieces. So she threw them away and went on with bare feet, not heeding the bogs nor the thorns that wounded her, nor the stones that bruised her. At last she reached a beautiful green meadow on the edge of a wood. Her heart was cheered by the sight of the flowers and the soft cool grass, and she sat down and rested for a little. But hearing the birds chirping to their mates among the trees made her think with longing of her husband, and she wept bitterly, and taking her child in her arms, and her bundle of chicken bones on her shoulder, she entered the wood.

For three days and three nights she struggled through it, but could find nothing. She was quite worn out with weariness and hunger, and even her staff was no further help to her, for in her many wanderings it had become quite blunted. She almost gave up in despair, but made one last great effort, and suddenly in a thicket she came upon the sort of house that the mother of the wind had described. It had no windows, and the door was up in the roof. Round the house she went, in search of steps, but could find none. What was she to do? How was she to get in? She thought and thought, and tried in vain to climb up to the door. Then suddenly she bethought her of the chicken bones that she had dragged all that weary way, and she said to herself: "They would not all have told me to take such good care of these bones if they had not had some good reason for doing so.

Perhaps now, in my hour of need, they may be of use to me."

So she took the bones out of her bundle, and having thought for a moment, she placed the two ends together. To her surprise they stuck tight; then she added the other bones, till she had two long poles the height of the house; these she placed against the wall, at a distance of a yard from each other. Across them she placed the other bones, piece by piece, like the steps of a ladder. As soon as one step was finished she stood upon it and made the next one, and then the next, till she was close to the door. But just as she got near the top she noticed that there were no bones left for the last rung of the ladder. What was she to do? Without that last step the whole ladder was useless. She must have lost one of the bones. Then suddenly an idea came to her. Taking a knife she chopped off her little finger, and placing it on the last step, it stuck as the bones had done. The ladder was complete, and with her child on her arm she entered the door of the house. Here she found everything in perfect order. Having taken some food, she laid the child down to sleep in a trough and sat down herself to rest.

When her husband, the pig, came back to his house, he was startled by what he saw. At first he could not believe his eyes, and stared at the ladder of bones, and at the little finger on the top of it. He felt that some fresh magic must be at work, and in his terror he almost turned away from the house; but then a better idea came to him, and he changed himself into a dove, so that no witchcraft could have power over him, and flew into the room without touching the ladder. Here he found a woman rocking a child. At the sight of her, looking so changed by all that she had suffered for his sake, his heart was moved by such love and pity that he suddenly became a man.

The princess stood up when she saw him, and her heart beat with fear, for she did not know him. But when he had told her who he was, in her great joy she forgot all her sufferings, and they seemed as nothing to her. He was a very

handsome man, as straight as a fir-tree. They sat down together and she told him all her adventures, and he wept at the tale. And then he told her his own history.

"I am a king's son. Once when my father was fighting against some dragons, who were the scourge of our country, I slew the youngest dragon. His mother, who was a witch, cast a spell over me and changed me into a pig. It was she who in the disguise of an old woman gave you the thread to bind round my foot. So that instead of the three days that had to run before the spell was broken, I was forced to remain a pig for three more years. Now that we have suffered for each other, and have found each other again, let us forget the past."

Next morning they set out early to return to his father's kingdom. Great was the rejoicing of all the people when they saw him and his wife; his father and his mother embraced them both, and there was feasting in the palace for three days and three nights.

Then they set out to see her father. The old king nearly went out of his mind with joy at beholding his daughter again. When she had told him all her adventures, he said to her:

"Did not I tell you that I was quite sure that the creature who wooed and won you as his wife, had not been born a pig? You see, my child, how wise you were in doing what I told you."

And as the king was old and had no heirs, he put them on the throne in his place. And they ruled as only kings rule who have suffered many things. And if they are not dead, they are still living and ruling happily.

# *The Three Musicians*

ONCE upon a time three musicians left their home and set out on their travels. They had all learned music from the same master, and they determined to stick together and to seek their fortune in foreign lands. They wandered merrily from place to place and made quite a good living, and were much appreciated by every one who heard them play. One evening they came to a village where they delighted all the company with their beautiful music. At last they ceased playing, and began to eat and drink and listen to the talk that was going on around them. They heard all the gossip of the place, and many wonderful things were related and discussed. At last the conversation fell on a castle in the neighborhood, about which many strange and marvelous things were told. One person said that hidden treasure was to be found there; another that the richest food was always to be had there, although the castle was uninhabited; and a third that an evil spirit dwelt within the walls, so terrible that any one who forced his way into the castle came out of it more dead than alive.

As soon as the three musicians were alone in their bedroom they agreed to go and examine the mysterious castle and if possible to find and carry away the hidden treasure. They determined, too, to make the attempt separately, one after the other, according to age, and they settled that a whole day was to be given to each adventurer in which to try his luck.

The fiddler was the first to set out on his adventures, and did so in the best of spirits and full of courage. When he reached the castle he found the outer gate open, quite as if he were an expected guest, but no sooner had he stepped

across the entry than the heavy door closed behind him with a bang, and was bolted with a huge iron bar, exactly as if a sentinel were doing his office and keeping watch, but no human being was to be seen anywhere. An awful terror overcame the fiddler, but it was hopeless to think of turning back or of standing still, and the hopes of finding gold and other treasures gave him strength and courage to force his way farther into the castle. Up-stairs and down-stairs he wandered, through lofty halls, splendid rooms, and lovely little boudoirs, everything beautifully arranged, and all kept in the most perfect order. But the silence of death reigned everywhere, and no living thing, not even a fly, was to be seen. Notwithstanding, the youth felt his spirits return to him when he entered the lower regions of the castle, for in the kitchen the most tempting and delicious food was spread out, the cellars were full of the most costly wine, and the store-room crammed with pots of every sort of jam you can imagine. A cheerful fire was burning in the kitchen, before which a roast was being basted by unseen hands, and all kinds of vegetables and other dainty dishes were being prepared in like manner. Before the fiddler had time to think he was ushered into a little room by invisible hands, and there a table was spread for him with all the delicious food he had seen cooking in the kitchen.

The youth first seized his fiddle and played a beautiful air on it which echoed through the silent halls, and then he fell to and began to eat a hearty meal. Before long, however, the door opened and a tiny man, not more than three feet high, stepped into the room, clothed in a dressing-gown and with a small wrinkled face, and a gray beard which reached down to the silver buckles of his shoes. And the little man sat down beside the fiddler and shared his meal. When they got to the game course the fiddler handed the dwarf a knife and fork, and begged him to help himself first and then to pass the dish on. The little creature nodded, but helped himself so clumsily that he dropped the piece of meat he had carved on to the floor.

The good-natured fiddler bent down to pick it up, but in the twinkling of an eye the little man had jumped on to his back, and beat him till he was black and blue all over his head and body. At last, when the fiddler was nearly dead, the little wretch left off, and shoved the poor fellow out of the iron gate which he had entered in such good spirits a few hours before. The fresh air revived him a little, and in a short time he was able to stagger with aching limbs back to the inn where his companions were staying. It was night when he reached the place and the other two musicians were fast asleep. The next morning they were much astonished at finding the fiddler in bed beside them and overwhelmed him with questions, but their friend hid his back and face and answered them very shortly, saying: "Go there yourselves and see what's to be seen! It is a ticklish matter, that I can assure you."

The second musician, who was a trumpeter, now made his way to the castle, and everything happened to him exactly as it had to the fiddler. He was just as hospitably entertained at first, and then just as cruelly beaten and belabored, so that next morning he too lay in his bed like a wounded hare, assuring his friends that the task of getting into the haunted castle was no enviable one. Notwithstanding the warning of his companions, the third musician, who played the flute, was still determined to try his luck, and full of courage and daring he set out, resolved, if possible, to find and secure the hidden treasure.

Fearlessly he wandered through the whole castle, and as he roamed through the splendid empty apartments he thought to himself how nice it would be to live there always, especially with a full larder and cellar at his disposal. A table was spread for him too, and when he had wandered about for some time, singing and playing the flute, he sat down as his companions had done, prepared to enjoy the delicious food that was spread out in front of him. Then the little man with the beard entered as before and seated himself beside the flute-player, who wasn't the least startled at his appear-

ance, but chatted away to him as if he had known him all his life, though he didn't find his companion very communicative. At last they came to the game, and as usual the little man let his piece fall on the ground. The flute-player was good-naturedly just going to pick it up, when he perceived that the little dwarf was in the act of springing on his back. Then he turned round sharply, and seizing the little creature by his beard, he gave him such a shaking that he tore his beard out and the dwarf sank groaning to the ground.

But as soon as the youth had the beard in his hands he felt so strong that he was fit for anything, and he perceived all sorts of things in the castle that he had not noticed before; but, on the other hand, all strength seemed to have gone from the little man. He whined and sobbed out: "Give, oh, give me my beard again, and I will instruct you in all the magic art that surrounds this castle and will help you to carry off the hidden treasure, which will make you rich and happy forever."

But the cunning flute-player replied: "I will give you back your beard, but you must first help me as you have promised to do. Till you have done so, I don't let your beard out of my hands."

Then the old man found himself obliged to fulfil his promise, though he had had no intention of doing so, and had only desired to get his beard back. He made the youth follow him through dark secret passages, underground vaults, and gray rocks till at last they came to an open field, which looked as if it belonged to a more beautiful world than ours. Then they came to a stream of rushing water; but the little man drew out a wand and touched the waves, whereupon the waters parted and stood still, and the two crossed the river with dry feet. And how beautiful everything on the other side was; lovely green paths leading through woods and fields covered with flowers, birds with gold and silver feathers singing on the trees, lovely butterflies and glittering beetles fluttering and crawling about, and dear little beasts hiding in the bushes and hedges. The sky above them was not blue, but

like rays of pure gold, and the stars looked twice their usual size and far more brilliant than on our earth.

The youth grew more and more astonished when the little gray man led him into a castle far bigger and more splendid than the one they had left. Here, too, the deepest silence reigned. They wandered all through the castle, and came at last to a room in the middle of which stood a bed hung all round with heavy curtains. Over the bed hung a bird's cage, and the bird inside it was singing beautiful songs into the silent space. The little gray man lifted the curtains from the bed and beckoned the youth to approach. On the rich silk cushions embroidered with gold a lovely maiden lay sleeping. She was as beautiful as an angel, with golden hair which fell in curls over her marble shoulders, and a diamond crown sparkled on her forehead. But a sleep as of death held her in its spell, and no noise seemed able to waken the sleeper.

Then the little man turned to the wondering youth and said: "See, here is the sleeping child! She is a mighty princess. This splendid castle and this enchanted land are hers, but for hundreds of years she has slept this magic sleep, and during all that time no human being has been able to find their way here. I alone have kept guard over her and have gone daily to my own castle to get food and to beat the greedy gold-seekers who forced their way into my dwelling. I have watched over the princess carefully all these years and saw that no stranger came near her, but all my magic power lay in my beard, and now that you have taken it away I am helpless and can no longer hold the beautiful princess in her enchanted sleep, but am forced to reveal my treasured secret to you. So set to work and do as I tell you. Take the bird which hangs over the princess' head, and which by its song sang her into this enchanted sleep—a song which it has had to continue ever since; take it and kill it, and cut its little heart out and burn it to a powder and then put it into the princess' mouth; then she will instantly awaken and will bestow on you her heart and hand, her kingdom and castle, and all her treasures.

The little dwarf paused, quite worn out, and the youth did not wait long to do his bidding. He did all he was told carefully and promptly, and having cut the little bird's heart out he proceeded to make it into a powder. No sooner had he placed it in the princess' mouth than she opened her lovely eyes, and looking up into the happy youth's face, she kissed him tenderly, thanked him for freeing her from her magic sleep, and promised to be his wife. At the same moment a sound as of thunder was heard all over the castle, and on all the staircases and in every room sounds were to be heard. Then a troop of servants, male and female, flocked into the apartment where the happy couple sat, and after wishing the princess and her bridegroom joy, they dispersed all over the castle to their different occupations.

But the little gray dwarf began now to demand his beard again from the youth, for in his wicked heart he was determined to make an end of all their happiness; he knew that if only his beard were once more on his chin he would be able to do what he liked with them all. But the clever flute-player was quite a match for the little man in cunning, and said: "All right, you needn't be afraid. You shall get your beard back before we part, but you must allow my bride and me to accompany you a bit on your homeward way."

The dwarf could not refuse this request, and so they all went together through the beautiful green paths and flowery meadows, and came at last to the river which flowed for miles round the princess' land and formed the boundary of her kingdom. There was no bridge or ferry-boat to be seen anywhere, and it was impossible to get over to the other side, for the boldest swimmer would not have dared to brave the fierce current and roaring waters. Then the youth said to the dwarf, "Give me your wand in order that I may part the waves."

And the dwarf was forced to do as he was told because the youth still kept his beard from him, but the wicked little creature chuckled with joy and thought to himself: "The foolish youth will hand me my beard as soon as we have

crossed the river and then my power will return, and I will seize my wand and prevent them both from ever returning to their beautiful country."

But the dwarf's wicked intentions were doomed to disappointment. The happy youth struck the water with his wand and the waves at once parted and stood still, and the dwarf went on in front and crossed the stream. No sooner had he done so than the waters closed behind him and the youth and his lovely bride stood safe on the other side. Then they threw his beard to the old man across the river, but they kept his wand, so that the wicked dwarf could never again enter their kingdom. So the happy couple returned to their castle and lived there in peace and plenty forever after. But the other two musicians waited in vain for the return of their companion; and when he never came they said, "Ah, he's gone to play the flute," till the saying passed into a proverb and was always said of any one who set out to perform a task from which he never returned.

# *The Three Dogs*

THE King of the Islets had three charming daughters, but the strange part about it was that he kept them shut up in a high tower, and nobody was ever allowed to go near them, save their own especial attendants.

Of course the king had a good reason for treating them in this manner. It was not that he did not love them. Oh, dear, no! It was for quite a different cause. On the day that each princess reached her second birthday an old crone had appeared at the palace, and whence she came, or whither she went, nobody had ever been able to find out. But each time she had left behind her a silver casket, and when it was opened they found a scroll inside. This scroll told that if the king allowed the child to be out in the open air, for even a few minutes, before she reached the age of fifteen, she would be carried off by the mountain trolls.

You must know that the princesses had just reached the ages of eight, ten, and twelve, so you may guess they were pretty nearly tired of being shut up in the gloomy tower.

One bright summer day they all three sat by their tiny window looking out on the garden below. It was not long before the youngest girl spied a fine peacock strutting about the terrace. He looked so grand, with the sun shining on his outspread tail, that she pointed him out to the other two.

Well, they all took such a fancy to the pretty bird that nothing else would please them but to run into the garden and see him closer. So they begged hard to be allowed to go out for a little, but it was not a bit of use, for the chief attendant held up his hands in horror at the very thought.

"Why," he said, "the king would have us all beheaded on the spot if we let you out for a single moment even!"

Still, the princesses pleaded so hard and so very prettily that at last they had their way, and, after promising not to stay out for more than five minutes, the doors were unlocked, and the three tripped into the open air.

But the peacock had vanished, so they ran from place to place in the hope of finding him again, until they were quite a long distance from the castle.

Suddenly a whole army of tiny men appeared, and where they sprang from the children had not the slightest idea. Before the princesses could utter a word, they were borne off by the mountain folk, and taken—nobody knew where.

There was a dreadful commotion at the castle when the news reached the king. To tell the truth, his majesty was so upset at losing his children that he wept for a whole week. After that he dried his eyes, "for," said he, "what's done can't be undone, I suppose"; which, of course, was quite true. So the king devoted all his time to searching for the lost princesses. But although they hunted north, south, east, and west, not a trace could be found of the missing children.

"This will never do," said his majesty one day. "The princesses must be found somehow. If there is a man in the kingdom who can rescue my three daughters, that man shall have one of the three princesses for his bride, and half the kingdom as well."

Now, two foreign princes chanced to be passing a few days at the court, and a more boastful pair could never be met.

"Find the princesses," said they. "We'll do that while the other folks are thinking over the matter," so off they set on their search, with their heads held high in the air.

You must know that in a wood at some distance from the palace dwelt a widow and her only son. "Boots" was the nickname she gave to him, and a fine-looking fellow he was, too. Since the widow was very poor indeed, it fell to the lad's share to look after his mother's hogs in the wood.

Day by day Boots set out for the forest with the three

hogs, and he always took with him a tiny flute, upon which he played such sweet music that all who heard it were charmed.

One fine morning he was amusing himself, as usual, by playing merry tunes, when suddenly a little old man appeared before him. He had a long, white beard, which flowed right down to his feet, and by his side trotted a big dog.

"Good morning, my son," he said, in a solemn tone. "I want to exchange my dog for one of your hogs."

Now, Boots thought this would not be a bad bargain at all. "If I had a dog," he said to himself, "it would take care of all the hogs for me." So he replied:

"You shall have one of the animals with pleasure, for I have taken quite a fancy to your dog."

"Very well," said the dwarf. "The gray hog with the white spot on its back will suit me best of all. And," he added, "you'll never regret having met me to-day, of that I'm sure."

"As for my dog," went on the little man, "there never was a dog like him," and the dwarf fairly chuckled with glee.

"Might I ask," said Boots, "what makes him such a remarkable animal? Does he do any wonderful tricks?"

"Tricks, indeed!" cried the little man. "My dog do tricks! Why, he'd scorn to do anything of the sort. He's no common animal. His name is Holdfast, and whatever you wish him to hold, he'll grip tightly, even though it be the fiercest Troll."

And with these words he vanished, leaving Holdfast behind.

So Boots waited until evening came, and then he drove the two hogs home again.

"I have done a fine stroke of business to-day, mother," he cried. "I've given one of our old hogs in exchange for this fine dog!"

"A dog!" cried the woman. "Why, lad, where is your sense? I can't take a dog to market and sell him. Oh, dear! oh, dear! we shall be ruined at this rate."

Boots tried to explain to her that this was no ordinary animal, but the woman was so very angry that she would not listen to a word, and she drove the lad out of the house.

"Holdfast!—hold!" cried Boots, in a loud voice, and up rushed the dog in an instant.

He seized the dame, and held her so tightly that she could not move so much as an inch.

"Help! Help!" cried the woman. "Boots, do set me free, there's a good lad!"

"Not until you promise to be friends again," replied the boy.

"If you'll only call off this animal," said the dame, in a terrified voice, "I'll never be angry with you again."

So Boots called off the dog, and peace was restored once more.

Next day the lad went off to the forest as usual, and this time he took the two hogs and his big dog with him.

After a time, he drew out his flute and began to play a merry air. To the great surprise of Boots, the dog began to caper and dance in the most comical manner, and Boots burst into fits of laughter at the sight.

In the midst of all this there appeared the same little man who had visited him the day before, and by his side walked another dog every bit as big as the first.

"Good-day, lad," said the dwarf. "I have come to see if you will give me another of your fat hogs."

"That I will," replied Boots, "if I may have your dog in exchange."

"This dog," said the little man solemnly, "is worth his weight in gold. 'Tear,' I call him, and whatever you bid him tear, he'll rend it into pieces, even though it be the fiercest of trolls. Still, you shall have him, for your hogs are in prime condition."

Well, away went the dwarf with the hog by his side, while the dog stayed behind with Boots.

In the evening the lad went home again, and this time he had only one hog to look after.

"I have had another stroke of luck, mother," said Boots, as soon as he set eyes upon the old woman.

"Luck, you call it, do you?" cried the angry dame, when she spied the second dog. "Then it's bad luck, and very bad, in my opinion. Of my three fat hogs, there is only one left."

This time she did not dare to turn the lad out of doors, for if one dog could grip as hard as Holdfast had done, there was no knowing what would happen if the pair of them set upon her, for they looked so very fierce.

Next morning Boots started out again for the forest, with the hog and two dogs by his side. He played a lively air on his flute, and this time both dogs fell to and danced and capered round.

"All this is fine fun," said Boots, and as he spoke up walked the little dwarf a third time, and by his side was another big dog.

"Good-day, lad," said the little man. "I should like to have your other hog, if you are willing to part with it. I have here a dog, and such an animal is to be found nowhere else. 'Quick-ear' his name is, and quick you'll find him, too. His hearing is so sharp that he knows what is going on a mile away. It's my belief," chuckled the dwarf, "that he can even hear the grass growing in the fields. Still, I will give him to you in exchange for your hog, if you will let me have it."

It did not take Boots long to make up his mind, and soon the little man was walking away with the last hog.

When evening drew nigh, Boots returned to the cottage, taking with him the three big dogs.

"Mother," he cried, "I have had still another stroke of good luck, for to-day I changed the last of your old hogs for this fine dog."

Well, the poor woman wept and wailed without ceasing, for how were they going to live now that Boots had got rid of all three of her hogs?

But the lad told her to dry her tears, for instead of being badly off, their fortune was nearly made.

"Just pack me up a little food, mother," he said, "and I'll

be off at once into the world with my dogs. I'm sure, with three such clever animals as these are, I shall soon find some way of making a goodly pile."

So Boots got his parcel of food, and away he went, with the three dogs running at his heels.

When he was about half-way through the forest, up walked the little man who had given him the three dogs.

"Whither away, lad?" asked the dwarf.

"To seek my fortune, father," replied Boots.

"Keep straight ahead, lad, until you reach a royal palace, and when you once get there, my three dogs will prove their worth, you will find."

So Boots thanked him kindly, and went on his way once more.

Now, everything happened just as the dwarf had said. Boots soon reached the king's palace, and he went boldly up to the guards and asked for admission.

"I have here three clever dogs," he said, "and I should just like to show his majesty how gracefully they can dance."

Well, in the end he was taken into the king's presence, and Boots drew out his flute and struck up a lively air. Directly the first note sounded, the three dogs began to dance and caper, and the more they danced the more his majesty roared with laughter.

Now, the king had never been known to smile since he had lost his daughters, seven years before, but now he was so pleased with the antics of the three dogs that he laughed again and again.

When the dancing was over, his majesty handed a big purse of gold to the lad, and thanked him for the delightful entertainment.

"Sire," cried Boots, "I want no gold! I only crave your majesty's permission to be allowed to search for the lost princesses, for I hear you have had no news of them yet."

"You may try your luck, with pleasure," replied the king, "and I hope you may succeed in your task, for I have taken quite a fancy to you myself."

So Boots took leave of the king, and set out once more into the world with his three faithful dogs. Holdfast carried all the food, while Quick-ear made it his business to listen intently to everything that went on around. As for Tear, he was the strongest of the three, and when Boots grew weary from tramping along the rough roads, he just got on to the back of Tear, and was carried along quite comfortably.

But one day Quick-ear was nowhere to be found, and Boots was in great trouble, for he thought the animal must surely be lost. All at once he came bounding back again, looking very important indeed.

"I have found one of them," he said, with a very knowing look on his face.

"I beg your pardon," said Boots; "you have found what?" for he had no idea that his dog could speak.

"I have found the eldest princess," was the dog's reply, "and now is your time to go to her rescue. I was passing by yon high mountain," he went on, "and I heard one of the king's daughters spinning inside it, and, if I am not mistaken, the Troll himself is not at home."

"Take me to the spot quickly!" ordered Boots; so Quick-ear led the way, and the youth and the other two dogs followed close behind.

When they came to the mountain, Quick-ear placed his ear to the ground.

"There is no time to be lost!" he cried loudly. "The Troll will soon be back. I can hear the golden shoes of his horse in the distance. He is just ten miles off."

So Boots told the three dogs to cast themselves against the door of the mountain with all their force, and this they did. The door flew open at once, and the youth and the dogs entered. They soon came to a room where they saw a beautiful maiden spinning. She used a golden spindle, and worked with golden thread, so of course Boots knew directly that she was a princess.

"Halt!" she cried, when she saw him. "Who dares to enter the Troll's home? Take my advice and be off at once.

He has kept me a prisoner here for seven long years, and never once have I set eyes on a human being all the time. If the Troll returns and finds you here he will kill you on the spot."

"Fair maiden," said Boots, "I fear no Troll, be he ever so fierce."

But while he spoke the words, up galloped the monster on his golden-shod horse.

"Who has broken open the door of my dwelling?" roared the Troll, in a terrible voice.

"I did!" cried Boots, boldly, "and in a like manner I will break your head!" he added.

"Ho! my fine fellow!" thundered the Troll, "we will soon see about that!" and he made a dash for the youth.

"Holdfast!" shouted the youth, "hold him! Tear and Quick-ear, kill him at once!"

Up rushed the three dogs, and they threw themselves upon the monster with such force that over he rolled.

Then Holdfast gripped him tightly, while the other two flew at his throat, and the next instant the Troll lay dead upon the floor.

"Now I am saved!" cried the princess, and she thanked Boots again and again.

Then the youth gathered together all the Troll's treasure, and saddled two of his horses. On one he placed the princess and on the other he himself rode, and away they went from the gloomy cave.

When they had gone on for about an hour, Quick-ear came bounding up to Boots with the news that he had found the second princess.

"She is in yonder mountain," he said, "for as I passed by I heard her spinning. If you go at once to her rescue, you may be able to manage it, for the Troll is not at home, I know."

"Oh, do save my poor sister!" cried the princess, when she heard the tale.

Yes, Boots would do his best to rescue her, he said, if

she herself did not mind being left alone while he went to the cave.

Of course the princess did not mind in the least, so Boots hurried off with his three dogs to the mountain.

"Don't waste time," said Quick-ear, "for already I hear the Troll riding home, and he is only eight miles off now."

So when they reached the mountain Boots bade the three dogs burst open the door, which they did quite easily.

The youth then stepped inside, followed by the dogs, and there sat a beautiful damsel spinning.

"Oh, dear!" she cried, when she saw Boots, "who dares to enter the Troll's home? Pray go at once, or he will kill you on the spot, if he finds you here on his return. For seven long years he has kept me a prisoner in this cave, and not a single human being have I set eyes upon the whole time until to-day."

"Have no fear, fair maiden," replied Boots, "for I am a match for the fiercest Troll that ever lived."

As he spoke, the Troll galloped up to the cave.

"Who broke open my door?" he roared, in a voice like thunder.

"I broke it open," said Boots, "and I'll break you in a like manner."

This made the Troll so angry that he raised his club to strike the youth, but Boots was too quick for him.

"Holdfast!" he cried, "hold him. Tear and Quick-ear, kill him at once!"

The dogs rushed up, and while Holdfast grasped the Troll's coat, the other two gripped him so tightly by the throat that he fell dead to the ground.

"Now I am saved!" cried the princess, and she thanked Boots over and over again.

Then Boots saddled a couple of the Troll's horses, and loaded them with all the treasure he could find in the cave. A third horse he made ready for the princess, and a fourth he mounted himself.

Away they rode at full speed from the mountain, and soon they came to the spot where the other maiden sat awaiting their return. You may guess the sisters were delighted to meet once more, and the three journeyed on together for some miles with the faithful dogs.

Next day Quick-ear came running up again, and this time he brought back news about the third princess.

"You will find her inside yonder mountain," he said, "for I heard her spinning as I passed by. Now is your time to go to the rescue, as the Troll is not at home."

"I will go at once and set her free!" cried Boots—"that is, if the princesses do not mind waiting here until I return."

No, they did not mind a bit; so Quick-ear led the way, and Boots followed with Holdfast and Tear.

"There is no time to be lost," said Quick-ear, when they reached the mountain. "The Troll is not more than five miles off now. I hear the clatter of his horse's hoofs along the road."

So Boots told the dogs to cast themselves against the door of the mountain with all their force. They did so, and the door flew open. Boots stepped inside, followed by the three animals, and there sat a maiden weaving cloth of gold.

"Who dares to enter the Troll's dwelling?" she cried. "For seven long years have I been a prisoner here, and never once have I set eyes upon a human being all the time until now. Pray go at once, for if the Troll finds you here on his return he will put you to death without doubt."

But Boots told the princess that he would be only too pleased to risk his life for such a beautiful maiden as she, and while he was speaking, up rode the Troll himself.

No sooner did he spy the open door than he guessed how things were directly. Now, this Troll was ten times more cunning than any of his brethren, so he stepped inside and pretended to greet Boots very kindly.

"Good-day, my friend," he cried. "Since you have been good enough to call, I hope you will honor us by staying to lunch."

Boots thought this very kind indeed of the Troll, and he replied that he would be very pleased to do so, and they all three sat down to a good meal.

When it was over the Troll pretended to be very thirsty.

"At the top of the mountain," he said to Boots, "there is a spring flowing with the finest wine, but, as luck will have it, I have nobody to send and fetch a draught of it."

"Oh," answered the lad, "if that is all, one of my dogs will get it."

Now that was just what the Troll wanted, for he thought that when once the dogs were out of the way, he would be pretty safe himself.

So Boots told Holdfast to go to the spring, and the Troll handed him a big pitcher, which he was to fill to the brim.

Time passed, but no dog came back, and at last the cunning Troll suggested that another of the dogs should be sent to find him.

Boots called Tear, and commanded him to set out and look for Holdfast at once.

"Perhaps the pitcher is heavy," he said, "and, if so, you can help him to carry it."

Some time passed, but neither of the dogs returned.

"It is quite clear," sneered the Troll, "that your dogs do not trouble to obey you. If they did, we should not be sitting here thirsty."

This made Boots so angry that he called Quick-ear, and bade him bring the others back at once.

But Quick-ear fared no better than the others had done. When he reached the top of the mountain, the Troll cast a spell over him, just as he had over the other two, and a big wall rose up around him.

No sooner were the three dogs safely out of the way than the Troll seized a huge sword from the wall and shouted:

"Now you are in my power; so prepare to die at once."

"One moment," cried poor Boots. "In our part of the country, when a man is doomed to die, it is usual to grant his last request."

"Out with it then, quickly," roared the Troll. "What is it you want?"

"Pray let me play just one tune on my dear old flute before I die," begged Boots.

"Make haste about it, then," shouted the Troll angrily.

Boots then began to play a merry air, and at that instant the spell was broken, and down the mountain rushed the three dogs.

"Holdfast!" cried Boots, "hold him! Tear and Quick-ear, rend him into pieces!"

Quick as thought the three animals cast themselves upon the Troll, and the next minute he lay dead upon the ground.

"At last I am free!" cried the princess, and she thanked Boots quite half a dozen times.

Then Boots took the Troll's gilded coach from the stable, and harnessed a fine pair of horses to it. When all was ready, he handed the princess in, and drove quickly to where the other two were waiting for him.

You may be sure there was great joy between the three sisters when they were united once more, and after that the four set out for the palace of the king.

They had not gone very far before they overtook two men, who were traveling in the same direction. The strangers were clothed in very ragged garments, and they looked so tired and worn that Boots took pity on them and offered to give them a lift in his coach.

Of course the two men were very thankful, and they told Boots their story. They were two princes, they said, and seven years before they had started out to search for the three princesses who had been carried away by the mountain folk. But although they had hunted everywhere, they had not been successful, and were now obliged to beg their way home, for they had not a penny left in the world.

Then Boots told the pair that the princesses had already been found, and were at that moment sitting in the chariot with them.

This news made the princes so angry that they put their

heads together and tried to think of a plan by which they might get rid of Boots. You see, they did not like the idea of another man succeeding where they had failed.

So they seized poor Boots and cast him out of the coach, and when they had wounded him badly, they left him by the roadside with his three faithful dogs.

As for the three princesses, they were threatened with death unless they would promise never to say a word about what had happened.

It was not long before they reached the palace, for the princes had whipped up the horses and driven at the top of their speed.

The king was overjoyed to see his children again, for he had begun to think they must really be dead.

He loaded all sorts of favors upon the two princes, for he thought they had been the means of restoring his daughters to him.

All this time poor Boots lay in the forest, where he had been left for dead. But the three dogs never moved from his side, and they licked his wounds again and again, until Boots at last began to recover.

When he was quite well, he set out on foot for the king's palace with the three dogs.

It was a long journey, but at last Boots came to the end of it. You may guess how surprised he was when he reached the royal dwelling to find a feast was being held. On every side he heard laughter and mirth, and he could not understand it at all.

"What is the meaning of all this merrymaking?" he asked one of the guards.

"I should just like to know what land you have come from, if you need to ask that question," replied the man. "I thought everybody knew that the three princesses have been found at last, and that to-morrow the two elder ones are to be married."

"Really," said Boots, "I have been traveling in foreign parts, you see, or I should no doubt have heard the news

before. And who are the two princesses going to marry, might I ask?"

"The king has bestowed one of them upon each of the two princes who rescued them," was the answer.

"And the youngest princess?" asked Boots. "Is she also to marry?"

"Oh, no, she will not hear of such a thing," answered the man.

Boots was delighted to know this, for he had fallen deeply in love with the youngest princess himself.

So he sent word to the king that he should like to add to the mirth by showing the guests his three wonderful dogs.

"Let him come in by all means," said his majesty, who was quite pleased with the idea.

Boots was taken inside, and the dogs followed close at his heels. He raised his flute to his lips and began to play one of his merry tunes; but at that instant the youngest princess recognized him.

"Father, father!" she cried loudly, "this is our brave rescuer; the two foreign princes are impostors, and you must not allow them to marry my sisters!"

"Not so fast," answered his majesty. "I must see into the matter."

Then the three princesses between them poured out the whole tale of how Boots had delivered them from the clutches of the mountain Trolls, and how the two princes had wounded him and left him in the forest to die, while they pretended to have saved the princesses themselves.

"But how do I know that this is the brave lad?" asked the king. "You may be mistaken."

"Our rescuer," replied the youngest princess, "had three clever dogs, named Holdfast, Tear, and Quick-ear, and here you see the very animals."

Of course the king knew then that there could be no mistake, and he received Boots very gladly indeed.

As for the two foreign princes, his majesty banished

them from the kingdom, and nothing more was ever heard of them.

So Boots received the promised reward, and he chose the youngest princess for his bride.

Then the king handed over one half of his kingdom besides, so that Boots was a rich man for the rest of his life. And thus ends the story of the Three Dogs.

# *The Butterfly*

IN the time of the illustrious Merinous it was indeed a pleasure to be a king; the laws were just, the people obedient, and peace was over the land. This monarch would have been the happiest of men, but for the continual complaints of his consort, which tore his very heart in twain. She wept continually for her daughters, nineteen of whom had perished in the flower of youth. The Fairy of the Fountain had promised a twentieth; but years had passed away in fruitless expectation. "You have neglected to do the fairy sufficient homage," said the king one day; "I shall give orders to conduct you to the foot of the mountain with pomp and splendor. But when arrived there the mountain itself must be climbed on foot, with many fatigues: most women would rather die childless than encounter them."

"Courage shall not be wanting on my part," said the queen, "and I wish to set out immediately."

The king kissed her forehead, bade her good-night, and fell asleep.

At early dawn appeared in the grand court of the palace an equipage, dazzling as the sun itself; the wheels were of massy gold, with emerald nails, which sparkled in the light. It was drawn by forty-two horses, white as snow, whose reins were of rose-colored satin, the fashion of that period. They snorted impatiently, striking fire from the pavement beneath their feet; their eyes were inflamed; their bits covered with foam; and their proud and triumphant air seemed already to announce the success of the queen's enterprise. Three thousand chevaliers, armed at all points and mounted on fiery courses, wheeled about the chariot, the air resounding with

their joyful acclamations of "*Long live King Merinous and his august spouse!*"

The queen saluted the people with the utmost grace and condescension, which caused such immoderate joy that she was almost stifled by the pressure of the crowd: but the guards gently kept them at a distance, and the procession passed on.

When her majesty had reached the foot of the mountain, she alighted from her chariot, and, accompanied by only four maids-of-honor, proceeded on foot.

This mountain was formed of slippery earth, slightly covered over with green turf, but giving way at every step. The queen's pretty little white satin shoes were soon left behind; and her feet next stuck so fast that she could not withdraw them; her fair hands were in the same plight; she cried aloud for succor, fearing she should be completely buried alive.

Turning then round to look for her maids-of-honor, she perceived that they had fallen flat on their faces (the impression remains till this day), and were struggling, making the most desperate efforts, less in consideration of their own danger than that of the queen. In fine, after four hours and a half's patient perseverance they succeeded in regaining their feet; and strange to say, no mud or clay attached itself to their clothes; nothing worse than a slight shade of the green turf, which assumed the appearance of a gauze veil. The fairy then, seeing the queen willing to overcome difficulties, would not try her further, but with one stroke of a wand reduced the mountain two or three hundred feet; the remaining height was very dry and easy of ascent.

The queen was thus conducted to a delicious grove: a coral fountain rose in the midst; its waters, of the purest rose color, wound along the meadow, murmuring plaintive airs, whose words were perfectly distinguishable. The fairy there welcomed her majesty, who prepared to explain the occasion of her journey; but that was quite unnecessary. The fairy, exacting profound secrecy, presented her with a phial of water drawn from the fountain, strictly ordering that it should be broken when she had drunk it all. The queen, charmed by

this reception, made presents of inestimable value, and rejoined her maids-of-honor, who had been thrown into an enchanted sleep. They then returned to the palace in such high spirits that all the court danced and sung for a month afterward.

In due course her majesty became, for the twentieth time, a joyful mother.

The magnificence and liberality displayed on this occasion exceed belief. The royal palace was surrounded by three hundred large spouts which poured forth alternately, night and day, the choicest sweetmeats, confectionery, and money; the streets, in fact, were filled—the passengers had only to stoop down and be satisfied.

But in the midst of these festivities the Fairy of the Fountain, uncovering the little princess' cradle, which was of mother-of-pearl studded with diamonds, perceived a beautiful butterfly, placed immediately under the infant's left eye.

The chief cradle rocker, who dreaded being taxed with negligence, took a humming-bird's wing, and endeavored to chase it away, but all in vain: it remained quite unconcerned in the same spot, extending its large wings of rose color and azure-blue on the face of the princess, appearing rather to caress than to wish to do her any injury. "Ah!" said the fairy, "this butterfly is not what you imagine. It is an enchantress, who presides at the birth of the most distinguished princesses, and endows them with a degree of levity which generally leads to misfortune. I can lessen the evil, without doubt, but I cannot entirely avert it." The queen wept bitterly at this sad news, and the king saw no person during eight days. He then ceased to think on the subject.

Misfortunes rarely enter into the speculations of kings. Masters of the destinies of others, mankind flatters them into a belief that their power can almost control fate itself. Accordingly, the visit of the butterfly did not produce much permanent inquietude. The poets-laureate and literati of the court turned it into numerous sentimental conceits; among others, that the insect had fastened on the princess' cheek mistaking it for a rose. This idea branched out into a hundred elegies,

a thousand madrigals, and fifteen hundred songs, which were sung in all the principal families, and adapted to airs, some already known, and others composed for the occasion.

The fairy frequently visited her little charge, but was unable to conquer her fickle disposition. Ten different nurses had already been obliged to give her up; she scratched them, bit them, and obstinately refused to be fed. When she grew older, and began her education, she was so easily wearied and vexed that no one dared to contradict her. The fairy was consulted, who made her smell at a very rare flower. This produced a degree of intelligence so extraordinary that in three days she could read, write, speak all languages, and play on every instrument after just twenty-three minutes' application.

The queen was now delighted, for the princess' talents were noised abroad equally with her beauty. She had scarcely attained the age of fourteen when many kings sought the honor of her hand. The good King Merinous was well stricken in years, and fondly desired to see Papillette established. All who seemed worthy of her received a favorable reception, and among this number was the accomplished Prince Favourite. After he had been presented in due form, the old monarch asked his daughter what she thought of their new guest.

"Sire," replied the maiden, "I have been brought up with too much modesty and reserve to bestow attention on strangers of the other sex."

"That is true," returned the monarch; "but merely regarding him as a picture, how has he appeared to you?"

"Tall and handsome," answered Papillette, "his chestnut hair clinging in close and crisping curls to his ivory brow; his eyes of violet-blue, filled with soft vivacity; his teeth, of the most brilliant white, divide lips of coral; his nose is perfect Grecian, and his limbs like the rarest statuary. I might say more, had I ventured to look at the prince."

"It is enough," said the king; "your first glance has shown you enough. I am delighted that you are so sensible of the merits of Prince Favourite, as I design him for your husband. Love him accordingly."

"Your majesty's commands are laws to your dutiful daughter," replied Papillette.

One may easily imagine with what magnificence preparations were made for the nuptials; the king hastened them, lest his daughter's fickleness and levity might cause disappointment to their dearest hopes.

Papillette one day, while steadily regarding her lover, who was kneeling before her, appeared struck by something which made an impression as sudden as disagreeable. She repulsed Prince Favourite, saying she was seized with a headache, and could not be troubled with company.

The lover submissively arose and went to seek the queen, beseeching her to find out what he had done, and to intercede in his favor. Her majesty accordingly questioned the princess, who, bathed in tears, threw herself into the arms of her mother, confessing that she had made a discovery which totally altered her sentiments regarding the prince. "Is it possible," added she, "that you have not perceived his ears, of so unusual a size, and a deep red color?"

"Is that all?" cried the queen. "In truth, I have not observed them, but to take notice of an imperfection so very trifling would make us appear ridiculous indeed."

"People cannot help their feelings," replied Papillette; "I have quite a horror of red ears; it is little worth while to be daughter of a great king if one must be crossed and thwarted in the most important arrangement of life."

The queen reasoned long; but this only increased Papillette's resistance: therefore, being quite defenceless against the tears of a child so dear, her majesty promised to speak to the king.

Merinous was firm in all his resolutions; he therefore declared that his daughter should become the wife of Prince Favourite, whether she liked it or not.

The queen had not courage to impart this dreadful intelligence; but she threw herself on the generosity of the prince, beseeching that he would himself break the engagement—thus shielding Papillette from the resentment of the king.

The distracted lover was ready to die with grief: but promised to do all she requested. He asked but three days' grace.

The queen consented; and Prince Favourite then summoned Queséca, chief barber to the king. "Barber," said he, "each country has its peculiar prejudices—its own ideas of beauty; here I find large ears are deemed a deformity; therefore I command thee to cut off mine."

"I cannot do it," replied the barber; "your royal highness has been grossly deceived. I have the honor of shaving the first lords of the court, and I know many of them whose ears are equally red and ten times as long as those of your royal highness. These very lords are among the most distinguished favorites of the king."

"I have summoned thee," replied the prince, "to operate and not to prate; obey my orders, and inflame not my ears still further by thy discourse."

"Alas!" said the barber, "since your royal highness means to sacrifice them to an unreasonable caprice, what signifies it whether they are inflamed or not?"

At these words the prince made a threatening gesture; and Queséca, no longer daring to resist, took his razor, and with a trembling hand separated two of the handsomest ears from one of the finest heads in the world: for be it known, that the princess only made a pretext of this assertion, because she had taken a fancy for somebody else.

The wounds bled profusely: the prince applied healing balm; and when in a condition to appear before her, enclosed his two ears in a little box, rare and precious, and presented it to Papillette, his heart once more filled with hope and love.

The princess eagerly opened the beautiful little casket, then dashed it with horror to the ground. "Prince!" she cried, "what can have induced you to mutilate yourself so cruelly? Could you imagine that I would ever wed a man who submitted to lose his ears?"

"Madam," said the prince, in consternation, "it was by my own order that——"

"What a goose you were then!" cried Papillette. "If you are not willing to become the ridicule of the court, I advise you to quit it with the greatest expedition imaginable."

The prince dared not call her cruel and ungrateful: he retired to the thickest retreats of a forest, and soon after entirely lost his reason.

The princess, once more free, confessed that among her numerous suitors there was one whom she preferred; this was Prince Malabar, whose martial mien announced the soul of a hero. The queen did not deny that Malabar had sought her daughter's hand, even before Favourite aspired to that honor, and King Merinous could now no longer insist on a marriage with this unfortunate prince, since he was quite insane, and ran naked through the woods, sometimes believing himself a hind, sometimes a wolf, and never stopping until exhausted by grief and despair. But in consenting to the marriage of his daughter with Prince Malabar, the king declared that, should she again change her mind, he would never forgive her.

The happy day was once more fixed, and Papillette, three days preceding, invited her lover to meet her in a delightful grove at the extremity of the gardens. This grove was planted with myrtles, so thick and high that they afforded a pleasant shade. Beautiful flowers sprang up on all sides; and added to the warblings of the birds in the trees were the voices of hidden musicians, singing a chorus, composed by the princess herself. This, however, Malabar, who was a soldier, and not a musician, and who naturally wished to have his lady-love's society all to himself, did not sufficiently appreciate.

"Princess," said he, "I would much rather hear you talk than these people sing."

"Are then those cares despised," replied Papillette, "which I have so assiduously employed to amuse and gratify you by the display of my talents?"

"Your dearest talent," cried he, "is that of pleasing: it comprises every other. Send away these people, I pray." He

added in a tone of the utmost irritation, "I hate—I detest music!"

"Have I rightly heard?" exclaimed the princess angrily; "and do you pretend to love, if your soul is insensible to such transporting sounds?"

"I wish they would transport themselves far enough away," returned the lover, who, like most other lovers, could be in an ill humor sometimes. "My princess, do order this scraping and squalling to cease."

"On the contrary, I order my musicians to remain," answered Papillette, quite indignant, "and never, never will I unite myself to him whom divine melody hath no power to move. Go, prince, barbarous alike in taste and science, seek some rustic maid, best suited to your insensibility."

The musicians, too far distant to hear these words, struck up a lively tune. Malabar imagined this done in derision, and it required all his respect for the princess to prevent him from falling on them, sword in hand. He repented much his words, but considered it beneath his dignity to retract them; the princess also refused to retract hers: so they parted.

Malabar resolved on instant death. Mounting the noblest courser in his stable, he rode down to the sea-coast, and plunged himself over a perpendicular cliff into the waters below.

The tide happened to be coming in, so that the body was soon washed on shore, and brought before the eyes of the cruel princess, laid on a litter formed of willow, hung with draperies of black crape.

She was standing at the window when the melancholy procession passed, and inquired what it was. None dared answer; they only removed the covering from the face of the dead. The princess uttered a loud shriek, and fainted away.

The king and queen lavished on her the most tender cares, but all in vain; she declared that she regarded herself as an inconsolable widow, and insisted upon putting on the deepest weeds.

King Merinous respected this caprice, and ordered twenty

thousand yards of crape for her use. She was just giving orders to have her apartments festooned with it, and holding a cambric handkerchief to her eyes, when a little green ape (a drawing-room favorite) dressed itself in weepers, and disposed one of the widow's caps most tastefully under its chin.

At this sight the princess burst out laughing so loudly and heartily that all the court ladies, who had been trying which could pull the longest and most sympathetic countenance, were greatly relieved, and began immediately to smile a little.

Gradually they removed from her eyes the trappings of woe, and substituted ribbons of rose color and blue of every shade and variety: trying on these so diverted Papillette's melancholy that the poor drowned prince was soon forgotten. Her tears indeed were vain; he had already had enough of water.

The king was in despair. "Alas!" said he to the queen, "we shall never have the consolation of marrying Papillette, or beholding our grandchildren. Of two monarchs so worthy of her, one has lost his reason, the other has cast himself into the sea; and while we continue to weep, she, already consoled, thinks only of diverting herself!"

"Sire," replied the queen, "calm your apprehensions. Our daughter is yet too young to feel true love in all its fervor; let us have patience, and seek alliance with none but those truly worthy of her affections."

"Such is my wish," replied the king, "and I begin to turn my views upon Prince Patipata; he has seen the portrait of Papillette, and is satisfied; but, though a wise and noble monarch, his personal qualifications are little in his favor."

"How so!" rejoined the queen.

"Because he is stiff, tall, and spare; his eyes bleared and filmy; his hair red, and so scanty withal, that it seems like a few strips of blasted flax hung around a distaff."

A few days after this conversation, Prince Patipata arrived at court; and the queen did not conceal from Papillette that, notwithstanding his personal disadvantages, he was intended for her spouse.

The princess laughed immoderately, yet, just for amusement,

she displayed toward him to perfection all the arts and graces of coquetry.

Prince Patipata having been informed of the deplorable end of his predecessors, concealed his love as carefully as the others had proclaimed theirs. He was so reserved and cold that the princess longed exceedingly to discover the state of his feelings. Accordingly, one day, while Patipata was walking with Salmoé, his intimate confidant, she hid herself in the trunk of an old tree, which had been hollowed out by lightning, and afforded apparently a secure retreat. The prince seated himself at the foot of it, but he had observed the princess; and, making a sign of intelligence to his companion, feigned to continue a conversation of which she was the subject. "Assuredly," said he, "the princess is very handsome; but flatterers, poets, and painters always overstep the truth. Her portrait has deceived me: its large blue eyes bear assuredly some resemblance to those of Papillette, but they bespeak an ardent and feeling heart, while hers is frivolous, volatile, and incapable of love. Her smile would be charming but for its satirical irony. And what is the value of the loveliest lips in the world, if they open but to deceive and betray!"

"I am much surprised," replied Salmoé; "I believed that your royal highness was equally loving and beloved."

"Far from it," returned Patipata; "it would ill become me, plain as I am, to be confident of pleasing; and I am not dupe enough to yield my heart without return. Do not you approve of this?"

"No," answered Salmoé, "your royal highness is too modest; I cannot sufficiently appreciate your humility."

The prince affected to be dissatisfied with this praise, and then moved onward in order to liberate Papillette, who was very inconveniently cramped, and almost suffocated with anger. Disagreeable truths seldom reach the ear of princesses; her resentment, therefore, was to be expected. Meanwhile, her heart being equally as capricious as her understanding, she felt ready to pardon, and even, on reflection, to justify Patipata. But pride soon combated this weakness; and she determined to

send him away. She complained to her father; assured him that by mere chance she had heard the most odious calumnies uttered by a prince who sported with their dignity, by falsely pretending to the hand of her whom he slighted and despised. The king was surprised; but, not having entered into any positive engagements with Patipata, he readily entered into her feelings, and intimated to the prince that his adieus would be well received. This Patipata expected; but, although not naturally presumptuous, he had read sufficiently into the heart of Papillette to feel some degree of consolation.

As no decisive explanation of any kind occurred, he was permitted to take leave of the princess. This he did with much firmness, while she appeared so much agitated that it was remarked by all the court. The men attributed this to hatred; but the ladies, who knew better, pronounced it love. They were convinced of the fact, when day by day she began to pine and refused to eat; and had not the chief cook every day invented some new ragout, she would inevitably have died of hunger.

The queen was in despair, and despatched a billet to the Fairy of the Fountain, fastening it to the tail of a little white mouse, which served as a messenger on this occasion; it was perfectly acquainted with the way, and in a few minutes the fairy arrived at the palace. The late events were mentioned to her, and the melancholy situation of the princess.

"I understand this case," said the fairy; "but it is necessary that Papillette should give me her confidence."

The fairy was so amiable and so much beloved by the princess that she easily yielded; and casting down her eyes, confessed that she loved one who regarded her with contemptuous indifference; and what rendered her choice still more degrading was that its object was as ugly as it was insensible.

"I am then to understand," replied the fairy, "that you wish to be cured of this unfortunate passion?"

"Alas, no!" rejoined Papillette, "for my only pleasure is in thinking of him, speaking to him as if he could hear, and persuading myself that, notwithstanding appearances, he could

have loved me, had he believed my heart capable of steady affections. I shall therefore die, leaving him alike ignorant of my regrets and my repentance."

"I would not advise you to die," said the fairy; "that is the only evil in the world without a remedy. But, my dear Papillette, what can I do to console you?"

"Let me see the prince once more, under some metamorphosis in which it is impossible for him to recognize me."

"Very well," replied the fairy. "But since you wish to risk it, and since a simple butterfly can scarcely compromise her dignity in following a king, under this form I shall transport you to his court."

So saying, the Fairy of the Fountain placed on her finger a little emerald ring, and the princess distinctly felt her arms change their shape—expand—become flexible, and form two light wings, clothed in the most brilliant colors. Her tiny feet quitted the earth, and as the window was open, she flew out, traversing the air, with a degree of rapidity which at first caused some sensations of fear. But soon the eager desire of seeing Patipata urged her forward, although natural instinct so far prevailed as to cause frequent descents to earth, where she rested on every tempting flower.

At length, entering the prince's gardens, she beheld him walking on a terrace watering a beautiful orange-tree. Her heart beat so violently that her first emotion was to hide, but, soon recovering self-possession, she flew forward and rested on a branch which he had just gathered.

"What a charming butterfly!" observed the king to his chief gardener. "Its colors are truly exquisite; I never recollect having seen any such before."

"Some new species, come to do mischief, I suppose," said the gardener, preparing to brush it rudely away. But it took refuge on the bosom of the king, with such caressing and tender familiarity that only a hard heart could have done it injury.

"Ah, little traitor!" cried Patipata, "thou wishest to win me by thy fleeting charms, and then escape forever. I already

know too well the pain of loving fickle beings such as thou. Yet still I must defend thee, and permit thy return to my orange-tree as often as thou desirest."

Papillette easily penetrated the thoughts of the prince, and although they uttered a reproach for her inconstancy, she fancied they also breathed the language of love; and returned in better spirits than usual to her father's palace, where her absence had been unobserved. From thenceforward she never omitted making use of the emerald ring, which transported her in a few moments to her royal lover; she followed him to his palace, saw him give audiences, preside in council, and everywhere prove himself just, great, generous, and worthy of all her affection. It is true that his eyes were still filmy, his body spare, and his hair as red as ever; but what signifies an outside casket when containing a priceless jewel within?

Patipata was determined against marriage; he therefore adopted as heir to the crown the son of a cousin, a young orphan, whom he purposed bringing up beneath his own eye. This prince little resembled his uncle: he had been much spoiled in infancy, and it was impossible to improve him. One day, while conversing with Patipata, he said: "Sire, I have a favor to ask your majesty, and I pray you not to refuse me."

"I shall willingly grant you anything reasonable," replied the king.

"It is but your beautiful rose-colored butterfly, which follows you everywhere."

"And if I were to give it to you, what then?"

"I would run this golden pin through its body, and stick it to a branch of the orange-tree, to see how long it would live. Oh, nothing could be more amusing!"

"Nothing could be more barbarous!" answered Patipata indignantly. "Go, you inspire me with horror; I banish you from my presence during three entire days, and remember, that if my butterfly should receive any injury, you shall be punished with unexampled severity!"

The poor butterfly, who had heard this discourse, knew not

how to express its gratitude and joy; it flapped its wings, and sported around its benefactor. The king held out his finger, and it rested there. "Thou shalt quit me no more," said he. "It is so sweet to be loved, even by a butterfly, that I would not willingly prove myself ungrateful: thou shalt feed at my table; I will serve thee with the finest fruits, the fairest flowers. Ah! if I can only make thee happy!"

On the following day Patipata went out hunting. In vain Papillette sought him in the park, in the garden, and near the favorite orange-tree. But his nephew, taking advantage of his absence, began chasing the pretty butterfly. The courtiers knew that he would one day be in power, and, eager to gratify his whims, assisted in the wanton sport: ministers the most pompous, members of council the most profound, climbed on trees, and capered through the meadows—one would have supposed them mad. But the royal insect, so familiar with the king, was for all others the most capricious of butterflies. It amused itself in leading the court a long chase, and at length rested in the private cabinet of the king, where they never once thought of seeking it.

Papillette, now all alone, could not resist the opportunity afforded of looking over a great quantity of writing which lay on the bureau. What was her surprise and joy on there finding verses, the most passionate and tender, which Patipata had written in her praise! They indeed revealed that he was proud, and would not risk a second refusal; but they vowed to remain faithful to her, and never to wed another.

The princess was so affected that two tiny tears stood in her butterfly eyes. Well indeed she might shed them, for at this moment the wicked little prince, her enemy, came behind, and seizing her by her two lovely wings, popped her into his hat.

"Now I have you!" cried he; and it is impossible to say what would have happened had not the king opportunely returned; when, in taking off his hat to his uncle, he let the butterfly go.

She, recovering from her fright, testified affection by many

little endearments; and Patipata, now accustomed to speak to her, exclaimed: "Beautiful insect, how happy art thou!—thou wanderest from flower to flower, without giving the preference to any—thou knowest not love—thou hast not found ingratitude! I, a king, cannot boast of such happiness. I adore the lovely Princess Papillette, and am dismissed from her court. I am ugly, it is true; but were I ever so handsome, I should not be more fortunate, for I too well know her fickle——"

The butterfly here sighed so deeply that the king started.

"Is it possible thou canst feel?" said he. "Oh, if my princess had but as much sensibility, I would know no other care! With her I would live in a hut, far, far from the deceitful splendor of a throne."

"The Princess Papillette would willingly accompany you," said a little voice, in tones of the finest and purest melody: and the butterfly's rosy wings blushed deep as crimson.

"What a prodigy!" cried Patipata. "Ah! butterfly, what dost thou know of my Papillette?"

"Suppose it were herself!" said a voice, which seemed to proceed from a little fountain of rock crystal which stood between the windows.

The prince turned round; but instead of the butterfly, he beheld the Fairy of the Fountain, holding the fair Papillette by the hand. They were both encircled by a light rose-colored cloud, which shed a softly brilliant light around the apartment.

Patipata bent one knee to the earth, and kissed the hem of the princess' garment.

"Come, prince," said the fairy, "King Merinous is apprised of what passes here. Papillette has overcome her evil destiny. Her affections are fixed and sure; and their object is yourself. And however ready you may both be to live in a hut together, I advise you not to do it. Love is sweeter than royalty, no doubt, but it is not impossible to unite both."

The lovers, transported with joy, placed their feet on the rose-colored cloud, which instantly carried them to the palace of the king. The Fairy of the Fountain, to complete her bene-

factions, rendered Patipata as handsome as he was amiable, and the nuptials were celebrated with suitable pomp and festivity. We are informed that Papillette had, at first, some slight returns of her natural disposition; but in one year she became a mother, and from thenceforward never knew frivolity more.

# *Perlino*

## I

### VIOLET

MANY years ago there lived at Pæstum a merchant by the name of Beppo, who was as good as bread, as sweet as honey, and as rich as the sea. He was a widower, and had but one daughter, whom he loved like his right hand. Violet, for that was the name of this beloved child, was as fair as a lily and as blooming as a rose. She had long black tresses, eyes as blue as the sky, cheeks as velvety as a butterfly's wing, and lips like a twin cherry. Add to this the wit of a demon, the grace of a seraph, the figure of Venus, and the fingers of a fairy, and you will understand that neither young nor old could help loving her at first sight.

When Violet was fifteen years old, Beppo began to think about marrying her. "The orange-tree," thought he, "brings forth its flower without knowing who will gather it, and the father watches over his daughter for long years like the apple of his eye, only that a stranger may rob him of his treasure some fine day without even saying 'Thank you.' Where shall I find a husband worthy of my Violet? No matter, she is rich enough to choose whom she likes. She is so beautiful and witty that she could tame a tiger should she undertake it."

The good Beppo often tried to talk to his daughter of marriage, but he might as well have flung his words to the wind. No sooner had he touched this chord than Violet cast down

her eyes and complained of headache; upon which her poor father, more troubled than a monk that loses his memory in the midst of his sermon, directly changed the conversation, and took from his pocket some gift that he always had in store—a ring, a bracelet, or a gold thimble, whereupon Violet kissed him, and the sun returned after the shower.

One day, however, when Beppo, more prudent than usual, had begun where he generally ended, and Violet held in her hands a necklace so beautiful that it was impossible for her to be sulky, the good man returned to the attack. "Oh, love and joy of my heart, staff of my old age, and crown of my gray hairs!" said he, caressing her, "shall I never see you married? Do you not feel that I am growing old? My gray beard tells me every day that it is time to choose you a protector. Why don't you do like other women? Do you not see that they are all dying to marry? What is a husband?—a bird in a cage, that sings whatever tune you please. If your poor mother was living, she would tell you that she never shed tears on account of not having her way; she was always queen and empress at home. I dared not breathe before her any more than before you, and I cannot console myself for my freedom."

"Father," said Violet, playfully chucking him under the chin, "you are the master, and it is for you to command. Dispose of my hand—make your own choice. I will marry when you like and whom you like; I only ask one thing."

"Be it what it may, I will grant it," cried Beppo, charmed at an obedience to which he was not accustomed.

"Well, father, all that I desire is that my husband shall not look like a dog."

"What a childish idea!" exclaimed Beppo, radiant with joy. "Men are right in saying that beauty and folly go together. If you did not resemble your mother, could you be guilty of such absurdities! Do you believe that a man of sense like me—do you believe that the richest merchant in Pæstum would be stupid enough to accept a son-in-law with a dog's face? Be easy; I will choose for you, or, rather, you

shall choose the handsomest and most amiable of men. Were he a prince, I am rich enough to buy him for you."

A few days after, Beppo gave a great dinner, to which he invited all the flower of the youth for twenty leagues around. The repast was magnificent; the guests ate much and drank more; every one was at his ease, and spoke from the fullness of his heart. When dessert was served, Beppo withdrew to a corner of the room, and, taking Violet on his lap, whispered to her: "My dear child, look at that handsome, blue-eyed young man, with his hair parted in the middle. Do you think that a woman would be unhappy with such a cherub?"

"Don't think of it, my dear father!" said Violet, laughing; "he looks exactly like a greyhound."

"It is true," cried Beppo, "he really does look like a greyhound. Where were my eyes that I did not see it? But that fine-looking captain, with his cropped head, stiff cravat, prominent chest, and protruding eyes—there is a man! What do you say to him?"

"Father, he looks like a bull-dog; I should always be afraid that he would bite me."

"It is true, he does look something like a bull-dog," replied Beppo, sighing. "We will say no more about him. Perhaps you would prefer a graver and more mature person. If women knew how to choose, they would never take a husband less than forty years old. Under that age, they find nothing but fops who suffer themselves to be adored; it is not till after forty that a man is really ripe to love and obey. What do you say to that counselor of law, who talks so well, and who likes so well to hear himself talk? What matter his gray hairs! Gray hair is wiser than black."

"Father, you are not keeping your word. You see very well that with his red eyes, and his white curls hanging over his ears, he looks like a poodle."

It was the same with all the guests; not one escaped Violet's tongue. One, who sighed timidly, resembled a Barbary dog; another, with long black hair and caressing eyes, had the face of a spaniel. No one was spared. It is said,

indeed, that every man looks like a dog when you put your hand under the nose, hiding the mouth and chin.

"Violet has too much wit," thought Beppo; "I shall never do anything with her by reasoning." Upon this, he pretended to fall into a rage, called her ungrateful, hard-hearted, and foolish, and ended by threatening to put her into a convent for the rest of her days. Violet began to cry; he fell upon his knees, asked her pardon, and promised never more to speak to her of anything that she did not like. The next morning he rose, after passing a sleepless night, kissed his daughter, thanked her for not having swollen eyes, and waited for the wind that turns the weathercocks to blow toward his house. This time he was not wrong. With women more things happen in an hour than with men in ten years; and the saying, "I will never travel this road," was not made for them.

## II

### BIRTH AND BETROTHAL OF PERLINO

One day, when there was a festival in the suburbs of the town, Beppo asked his daughter what he should bring her.

"Father," said she, "if you love me, buy me half a ton of white sugar, and the same quantity of blanched almonds, five or six bottles of scented water, a little musk and amber, forty pearls, two sapphires, and a handful of garnets and rubies; bring me also twenty skeins of gold thread, ten yards of green velvet, and a piece of cherry colored silk; and, above all things, don't forget a silver trough and trowel."

The merchant was greatly astonished; but he had been too good a husband not to know that with women the shortest way is not to reason, but to obey, and he returned home at night with his mule heavily laden.

Violet ordered all her gifts to be carried to her chamber; then shut herself up, and set about making a paste with the

sugar and almonds, which she moistened with the rose and jasmine water. She kneaded the paste in the trough, and molded it with her silver trowel, like a potter or a sculptor, into the most beautiful young man that ever was seen. She made his hair of the gold thread, his eyes of the sapphires, his teeth of the pearls, and his tongue and lips of the garnets and rubies; after which she dressed him in the silk and velvet, and christened him Perlino, because he was as fair and rosy as the mother-of-pearl.

When she had finished her masterpiece, and stood it on the table, Violet clapped her hands, and began to dance about Perlino. She sang him the most tender airs, addressed to him the sweetest words, and blew him kisses that would have warmed a heart of stone, but all in vain—the doll did not stir. Violet was beginning to cry for spite, when all at once she recollected that she had a fairy for a godmother. What godmother, above all when she is a fairy, ever rejects the first prayer of her godchild? Violet prayed so long and earnestly that her godmother heard her two hundred leagues off, and took pity on her. She blew with her lips — it is all that fairies need to do to work a miracle—when lo! Perlino opened first one eye and then the other, turned his head to the right and left, and yawned in the most natural manner imaginable; then, while Violet wept and laughed for joy, he began to walk slowly, and with mincing steps, across the table.

More delighted than if she had won the kingdom of France in a lottery, Violet caught Perlino in her arms, kissed him on both cheeks, and sang:

"Perlino, my darling, my treasure, my pride,
Now let us dance, and I'll be thy bride;
Now let us dance, now let us sing,
I will be queen, thou shalt be king.
Now we are both in the spring-time of life,
Light of my eyes, I'll be thy wife,
To dance and to play
Through the long day;

This will be life, joyous and gay;
And if my wish thou dost ever obey,
The gods will not be
More happy than we."

Beppo, who was taking an account of his goods for the second time, dissatisfied at having made only a million of dollars in a year, heard the noise overhead. "Upon my word," he exclaimed, "there is something strange up-stairs; it sounds as if some one were quarreling."

He mounted the stairs, and, pushing open the door, saw the most beautiful sight in the world. Opposite his daughter, flushed with pleasure, stood Cupid in person—Cupid, dressed in silk and velvet. With both hands clasped in those of his little mistress, Perlino was skipping and dancing, as if he were never to stop.

As soon as Violet perceived her father, she made a low bow, and, presenting to him her beloved, said: "My lord and father, you wish to see me married. To obey and please you, I have chosen a husband according to my own heart."

"You have done well, my child," replied Beppo, who read the mystery; "all women ought to follow your example. I know of more than one who would cut off one of her fingers, and not the little one either, to manufacture a husband according to her heart, all made of sugar and orange-flower water. Give them your secret, and you will dry up many tears. For two thousand years they have been complaining, and for two thousand years longer they will complain of being misunderstood and sacrificed." Saying this, he embraced his daughter, and asked for two days to make ready for the wedding. No less time was needed to invite all their friends round about, and to prepare a dinner which would not be unworthy of the richest merchant of Pæstum.

## III

### THE ABDUCTION OF PERLINO

To see so novel a marriage, every one came from the whole country round; rich and poor, young and old, friends and foes, all wished to know Perlino. Unhappily, there seldom is a wedding unless some evil genius meddles with it, and Violet's godmother had not foreseen what would happen.

Among the invited guests there was a personage of considerable importance—a countess of the neighborhood, by the name of the Lady of the Chinking Guineas. She was as wicked and as old as well could be, her skin was yellow and wrinkled, her eyes haggard, her cheeks hollow, her nose hooked, and her chin pointed; but she was rich, so rich that every one bowed down to her as she passed, and disputed the honor of kissing her hand. Beppo bent to the ground, and seated her at his right hand, happy and proud to present his daughter and son-in-law to a lady who, having more than a hundred millions, did him the favor to eat his dinner.

During the whole meal the Lady of the Chinking Guineas did nothing but gaze at Perlino. Her heart was burning with envy. The countess lived in a castle worthy of the fairies, with walls of gold and pavements of silver. In this castle there was a gallery in which all the curiosities of the world were assembled—a clock that always struck the hour desired; an elixir that cured gout and headache; a philter that changed sorrow to joy; an arrow of love; the shade of Scipio; the heart of a coquette; the religion of a doctor; a stuffed siren; three horns of a unicorn; the conscience of a courtier; the politeness of a man newly enriched; and the hippogriff of Orlando—all things that never had been and never would be seen anywhere else. But this treasure lacked one gem—this cherub of a Perlino.

Before dessert arrived the lady had resolved to gain pos-

session of him. She was very avaricious; but what she desired she must have at once, no matter at what price. She bought all that was to be sold, and even that which was not for sale; all the rest she stole, quite certain that the laws were only made for the poor. "From an ignorant doctor, a stubborn mule, and a wicked woman, good Lord, deliver us!" says the proverb. No sooner had they risen from the table than she drew near Perlino, who, born only three days before, had not yet opened his eyes to the wickedness of the world, and told him of all the beauty and riches in the Palace of the Chinking Guineas. "Come with me, my dear little friend," said she, "and I will give you whatever place you like in my palace. Choose; would you rather be a page dressed in gold, a chamberlain with a diamond key suspended about your neck, or a door-keeper with a silver halberd and a great gold breastplate that will make you more brilliant than the sun? Speak but a word, and all is yours."

The poor innocent was dazzled; but, however short a time he had breathed his native air, he was already a Neapolitan, that is, the reverse of stupid.

"Madam," answered he ingenuously, "to work is the trade of oxen; there is nothing so healthful as repose. I should like a profession in which there was nothing to do and a great deal to gain, like the canons of St. Januarius."

"What!" said the lady of the Chinking Guineas, "at your age, would you already be an idler?"

"Yes, and twice over," interrupted Perlino, "so as to earn double wages."

"That makes no difference," returned the countess; "in the mean time, come, and I will show you my carriage, my English coachman, and my six gray horses." She drew him toward the door. "And Violet?" said Perlino faintly. "Violet is following us," replied the lady, dragging on the imprudent boy, who suffered her to lead him. Once in the yard, she showed him her beautiful horses, which were pawing the ground and shaking their nets of red silk hung with golden bells; then persuaded him to enter the carriage to try

the cushions, and look at himself in the mirrors. Suddenly she shut the door, the coachman cracked his whip, and off they went at full gallop toward the Castle of the Chinking Guineas.

Violet meanwhile was gracefully receiving the congratulations of the assembly. Astonished at not seeing her betrothed, who had clung to her like her shadow, she ran through all the rooms without finding him; then climbed to the top of the house to see if he had not gone there to breathe the fresh air, but all in vain. In the distance she perceived a cloud of dust, and a coach with six horses going at full gallop toward the mountain. There was no more doubt; it was carrying off Perlino. At the sight Violet felt her heart sink within her. Without thinking that she was bareheaded and in bridal attire, with lace dress and satin shoes, she rushed from her father's house and ran after the carriage, shouting Perlino's name, and stretching out her arms. She might as well have cried to the winds. The ungrateful boy was wholly absorbed in the honeyed words of his new mistress. He was playing with the rings on her fingers, and dreaming already that the next morning he should awaken a prince. Alas! there are older ones than he that are no wiser. When do men learn that at home goodness and beauty are worth more than riches? When it is too late, and they no longer have strength to break the chains that they have put on their own hands.

## IV

### NIGHT AND DAY

Poor Violet ran all day long after Perlino; ditches, brooks, thickets, briers, thorns, nothing stopped her. He who suffers for love feels no pain. When evening came she found herself in a dark forest, overpowered with fatigue and half dead

with hunger, her hands and feet covered with blood. Seized with terror, she looked around her; a thousand faces seemed to glare threateningly from the darkness. She threw herself trembling at the foot of a tree, calling on Perlino, in a low voice, to bid him a last farewell.

As she held her breath, so frightened that she dared not move, she heard the trees about her talking together. It is the privilege of innocence to understand all the creatures of God. "Neighbor," said a carob-tree to a hollow olive-tree, "that young girl is very imprudent to lie on the ground. In an hour the wolves will quit their den, and if they spare her, the morning dew and cold will give her a fever from which she will never recover. Why doesn't she climb among my branches? She could sleep there in peace, and I would willingly give her some of my pods to recruit her exhausted strength."

"You are right, neighbor," answered the olive-tree. "The child would do still better if, before going to sleep, she should put her hand into my trunk, where the bagpipe and clothes of a piper are hidden. A goat-skin is not to be despised as a protection from the cold night air; and a lace dress and satin shoes are a light costume for a girl to roam the world in."

Violet was reassured when she had found the coarse jacket, goat-skin cloak, pointed hat, and bagpipe of the piper. She bravely climbed the carob-tree, ate its sugared fruit, drank the evening dew, and, wrapping herself up warmly, lay down among the branches as well as she could. The tree clasped its paternal arms about her, the wood-pigeons left their nests to cover her with leaves, the wind rocked her like an infant, and she fell asleep thinking of her beloved.

On waking the next morning she was filled with terror. The weather was calm and beautiful, but in the silence of the woods the poor child felt her solitude more deeply than ever. Every thing was living and loving around her; and who thought of the poor forsaken one? She began to sing in order to call to her aid all that passed by without looking at her; but the wind swept on murmuring, the bee set out in

search of his booty, the swallows chased the flies high in the air, the birds chirped and sang to each other in the foliage, and no one troubled himself about Violet. She descended from the tree with a sigh, and marched straight forward, trusting to her heart to find Perlino.

## V

### THE THREE FRIENDS

A TORRENT fell from the mountain, the bed of which was partly dried up. Violet followed this road. The red laurels were already springing from the water, their branches covered with flowers. Violet plunged among the verdure, followed by the butterflies, fluttering around her as around a lily shaken by the wind. She walked faster than an exile returning home; but the heat was intense, and before noon she was forced to stop.

On approaching a pool of water to cool her burning feet, she saw a drowning bee. She extended her tiny foot, and the insect climbed on it. Once dry, the bee remained for some time motionless as if to regain breath; then it shook its damp wings, and, passing over its whole body its foot softer than silk, it dried and polished itself, and, taking flight, buzzed around her who had saved its life.

"Violet," it said, "you have not obliged an ingrate. I know where you are going; let me go with you. When I am tired, I will rest on your head. If ever you are in need of me, only say

> "'Nebuchadnezzar, hark and behold,
> The peace of the heart is better than gold,'

and perhaps I can serve you."

"Ah!" said Violet, "I never can say '*Nebuchadnezzar.*'"

"What do you want?" asked the bee.

"Nothing, nothing," replied Violet; "I shall not need you till I reach Perlino."

She set out again on the way with a lighter heart. In a few minutes she heard a faint cry; it was a white mouse that had been wounded by a hedgehog, and had escaped its enemy covered with blood, and half dead. Violet took pity on the poor animal. Notwithstanding her haste, she stopped to wash its wounds, and to give it one of the carob-pods which she had kept for her breakfast.

"Violet," said the mouse, "you have not obliged an ingrate. I know where you are going. Put me into your pocket with the rest of your carob-pods. If ever you are in need of me, only say

"'Tricche, verlacche,
Coat of gold and heart of a lackey,

and perhaps I can serve you."

Violet slipped the mouse into her pocket, that it might nibble there at its ease, and continued to ascend the torrent. Toward dusk she approached the mountain, when suddenly a squirrel fell at her feet, pursued by a frightful screech-owl. Violet was not timid. She struck the owl with her bagpipe, and put it to flight, then picked up the squirrel, which was more stunned than hurt by its fall, and brought it to life by dint of care.

"Violet," said the squirrel, "you have not obliged an ingrate. I know where you are going. Put me on your shoulder, and pick some nuts for me, that I may not let my teeth grow long for want of something to do. If ever you are in need of me, only say

"'Patita, Patite,
Look well and you'll see,'

and perhaps I can serve you."

Violet was somewhat astonished at these three encounters. She relied little on this gratitude in words; what could such weak friends do for her? "No matter," thought she, "it is

always right to do good; let what will happen, I have had pity on the unfortunate." No sooner had she said this than the moon came out from a cloud, and its pale light fell on the old Castle of the Chinking Guineas.

## VI

### THE CASTLE OF THE CHINKING GUINEAS

THE sight of the castle was not calculated to reassure her. On the top of a mountain, which was nothing but a mass of crumbling rocks, she saw battlements of gold, turrets of silver, and roofs of sapphire and ruby, surrounded with great ditches full of greenish water, and defended by drawbridges, portcullises, parapets, enormous bars, and loopholes from which protruded the throats of cannon, and all the paraphernalia of war and murder. The beautiful palace was nothing but a prison. Violet painfully climbed a winding path, and finally reached a narrow passage, which led to an iron door furnished with a huge lock. She called without receiving an answer; then pulled a bell, upon which a jailer appeared, blacker and uglier than Cerberus.

"Begone, beggar!" he cried, "or I will knock you down. There is no lodging for the poor here. In the Castle of the Chinking Guineas we give alms only to those that do not need them."

Poor Violet turned away weeping. "Courage," said the squirrel, cracking a nut; "play your bagpipe."

"I never played in my life," answered Violet.

"The more reason for doing so," replied the squirrel. "So long as you have not tried to do a thing, you don't know whether you can do it or not. Blow!"

Violet began to blow with all her might, moving her fingers and singing in the instrument, when behold! the pipes filled, and played a tarantella that would have caused the dead to

dance. At the sound the squirrel leaped to the ground, and the mouse did not stay behind. They skipped and danced like true Neapolitans, while the bee buzzed and whirled around them. It was a sight well worth paying for.

At the sound of this sweet music the black shutters of the castle were quickly seen to open. The Lady of the Chinking Guineas had her maids of honor, who were not sorry to look out from time to time to see whether the flies always buzzed the same way. It was in vain not to be curious; it was not every day that they heard a tarantella played by such a handsome shepherd as Violet.

"Boy," cried one, "come this way!"

"No," called another, "come on my side." And they all smiled on him, but the door remained shut.

"Ladies," said Violet, taking off her hat, "be as good as you are beautiful. I have been overtaken by night in the mountain, and have neither lodging nor supper. Give me a corner in the stable and a crust of bread, and I and my little dancers will amuse you all the evening."

The regulations were strict in the Castle of the Chinking Guineas. There was such fear of robbers that no one was admitted after dusk. The ladies knew this well; but in an honest household there is always a hangman's rope to be found. One end was thrown out of the window; in an instant Violet was hoisted into a large chamber, with all her menagerie, and there she was forced to blow, and sing, and dance for long hours without being permitted to open her mouth to ask after Perlino. No matter, she was happy in feeling herself under the same roof with him, and it seemed to her that at this moment the heart of her beloved must be beating like her own. The innocent child believed that it was only necessary to love in order to be loved. Her dreams that night were sweet ones.

## VII

### NEBUCHADNEZZAR

EARLY the next morning, Violet, who had slept in the barn, clambered on the roof and looked about her; but her eyes wandered in vain in all directions; she saw nothing but grated towers and solitary gardens. She burst into tears, in spite of all the efforts of her three little friends to comfort her.

In the courtyard, all paved with silver, she found the maids of honor seated in a circle, spinning gold and silver flax on their distaffs. "Begone!" they exclaimed, as soon as they saw her; "if the countess should see your rags, she would turn us all out of doors. Begone! vile piper, and never return; unless, indeed, you should become a prince or a banker."

"Oh, do not send me away so soon, fair ladies," replied Violet; "let me wait on you; I will be so good and so obedient that you will never regret having let me stay."

The first maid of honor, a tall, thin, wrinkled, yellow, and sharp-featured woman, rose, and, for her sole answer, motioned the little shepherd to the door, and called the jailer, who advanced, frowning and brandishing his pike.

"I am lost!" exclaimed the poor girl; "I shall never more see my Perlino!"

"Violet," said the squirrel gravely, "gold is tried in the furnace, and friends in misfortune."

"You are right!" exclaimed Violet.

> "'Nebuchadnezzar, hark and behold,
> The peace of the heart is better than gold!'"

The bee instantly flew in the air, and behold! a beautiful crystal coach, with ruby shafts and emerald wheels, suddenly appeared in the courtyard. The equipage was drawn by four black dogs the size of rats. Four large beetles, dressed as jockeys, guided the tiny steeds with a light hand. At the

back of the carriage, luxuriously reclining on cushions of blue satin, was stretched a young woodpecker, dressed in a little rose-colored bonnet and a heavy brocade robe, so full that it fell over the wheels. The lady held a fan in one hand, and a smelling-bottle, and a handkerchief embroidered with her arms and trimmed with broad lace, in the other. By her side, half buried under the silken folds, was an owl, with languid air, listless eye, and bald head, and so old that his beak lapped like a pair of dislocated scissors. They were a new-married couple who were making their wedding-calls—a fashionable establishment, such as the Lady of the Chinking Guineas adored.

At the sight of this masterpiece, a cry of admiration and joy awakened all the echoes of the palace. The jailer let fall his pike with astonishment, while the ladies ran after the carriage and four spaniels, which set off at full gallop as if they were carrying the king in person. The strange noise disturbed the Lady of the Chinking Guineas, who was in constant fear of being robbed. She ran thither furious, resolved to turn all her maids of honor out of doors. She paid to be respected, and was determined to have the worth of her money. But when she perceived the equipage—when the owl saluted her with a sign of his beak, and the woodpecker waved her handkerchief three times with charming nonchalance, the lady's anger vanished in smoke.

"I must have this!" cried she. "What is the price of it?"

The countess' voice frightened Violet, but the love of Perlino gave her courage. She replied that, poor as she was, she loved her fancy better than all the gold in the world, and that she prized her carriage, and would not sell it for the Castle of the Chinking Guineas.

"Oh, the foolish vanity of beggars!" muttered the lady. "Truly, none but the rich have a holy respect for gold, and are ready to do anything for a dollar. I must have this carriage," added she, in a threatening tone; "cost what it may, I will have it."

"Madam," said Violet, greatly excited, "it is true that I

will not sell it, but I shall be happy to offer it to your ladyship as a gift if you will grant me one favor."

"It will be dear," thought the countess. "Speak!" said she to Violet; "what do you want?"

"Madam," replied Violet, trembling, "it is said that you have a museum in which all the curiosities of the world are collected. Show them to me; if there is anything there more wonderful than this carriage, my treasure is yours."

For her sole answer, the Lady of the Chinking Guineas shrugged her shoulders, and led Violet to a great gallery, the like of which had never been seen. She showed her all her riches—a star fallen from heaven; a necklace made of a moonbeam, plaited in three strands; black lilies; green roses; an eternal love; fire that did not burn, and many other curiosities; but she did not show the only thing that would have moved Violet—Perlino was not there.

The countess vainly sought admiration and astonishment in the eyes of the little shepherd; she read nothing there but indifference. "Well," said she, "all these marvels are far more wonderful than your four puppies; the carriage is mine."

"No, madam," said Violet; "all these things are dead, and my curiosities are living. You cannot compare sticks and stones to my owl and woodpecker—personages so real and natural that it seems as if you had just met them in the street. Art is nothing compared with life."

"Is that all?" said the countess. "I will show you a little man made of sugar and almond paste, who sings like a nightingale and reasons like a professor."

"Perlino!" cried Violet.

"Ah!" said the Lady of the Chinking Guineas, "my maids of honor have been chattering." She looked at the piper with the instinct of fear. "On reflection," she added, "I do not want your child's toys—begone!"

"Madam," said Violet, trembling, "let me speak to this miracle of a Perlino, and take the carriage."

"No," said the countess, "begone! and take your animals with you."

"Only let me see Perlino."

"No, no!" replied the lady.

"Only let me sleep a night at his door," resumed Violet, in tears. "See what a jewel you are refusing!" she added, bending on one knee, and offering the carriage to the Lady of the Chinking Guineas.

At the sight the countess hesitated, then smiled; in an instant she had found the means of deceiving Violet and obtaining what she coveted for nothing. "It is a bargain," said she, seizing the carriage; "you shall sleep to-night at Perlino's door, and shall even see him; but I forbid you to speak to him."

The evening come, the Lady of the Chinking Guineas sent for Perlino to sup with her. When she had made him eat and drink heartily, which was an easy thing with a youth of a yielding disposition, she poured out some excellent wine into a gilt cup, and, taking a crystal box from her pocket, took from it a reddish powder, which she threw into the wine. "Drink this, my child," said she to Perlino, "and tell me how you like it."

Perlino, who did whatever he was bid, swallowed the liquor at a single draught.

"Pah!" cried he, "this drink is detestable; it smells of blood and wine; it is poison!"

"Foolish fellow!" replied the countess, "it is potable gold; whoever has drunk it once will drink it always. Take another glass," she added; "you will find it better than the first."

The lady was right. Scarcely had the child emptied the cup, when he was seized with a raging thirst. "More! more!" he cried. He would not quit the table; and, to persuade him to go to bed, the countess was obliged to make him a great paper cornet of this marvelous powder, which he put carefully into his pocket as a remedy for all evils.

Poor Perlino! it was indeed a poison, and the most terrible of poisons, that he had taken. Whoever drinks potable gold feels his heart frozen the instant the liquid enters his stomach.

He neither knows nor loves anything thenceforth, neither father, nor mother, nor wife, nor children, nor friends, nor country; he thinks only of himself, and wishes to drink, and would drink all the gold and blood of the world without quenching a thirst that nothing could satisfy.

Meanwhile, what was Violet doing? The time seemed as long to her as a day without bread to the poor. As soon as night put on her black mask to open the starry ball, Violet ran to Perlino's door, quite sure that on seeing her he would throw himself into her arms. How her heart beat when she heard him coming up the stairs! and what was her sorrow when the ingrate passed by without even looking at her!

The door closed and doubled locked, and the key taken out, Violet threw herself on a mat that had been given her through pity, and, bursting into tears, covered her face with her hands to stifle her sobs. She did not dare to complain for fear of being driven away; but when the hour came in which the stars alone had their eyes open, she scratched gently on the door, and sang to Perlino in a low voice:

"Dost thou hear me, Perlino?
'Tis I who would free thee:
Open quickly to me,
Lest I die ere I see thee.
I tremble, I shiver, I sigh,
Since thou, love, no longer art nigh.
Night or day,
Since thou art away,
I no more am glad or gay."

Alas! it was in vain. Nothing stirred in the room. Perlino was snoring, and dreaming only of his gold dust. The hours dragged slowly along, bringing no hope. But, however long and painful the night, the morning was still sadder. The Lady of the Chinking Guineas appeared at daybreak. "Are you satisfied, handsome piper?" said she, with a malicious smile. "The carriage is paid for at your own price."

"May you have such contentment all the days of your life!" murmured poor Violet. "I have passed such a wretched night that I shall not soon forget it."

## VIII

### TRICCHE, VERLACCHE

VIOLET retired sadly. Her hopes were vanished, and nothing was left for her but to return to her father's house, and forget him who no longer loved her. She crossed the courtyard, followed by the maids of honor jeering at her simplicity. On reaching the gate, she turned to take a last look. Seeing herself alone, she burst into tears, and hid her face in her hands.

"Begone, beggar!" cried the jailer, seizing her by the collar, and shaking her with an air of importance.

"Begone!" said Violet; "never!

"'Tricche, Verlacche,
Coat of gold and heart of a lackey,'"

cried she.

And behold! the mouse sprang at the jailer's face and bit it till it bled; then an immense bird-cage, as large as a Chinese pavilion, rose up before the gate. The bars were of silver, and the seed-cups of diamonds, with pearls for hemp-seed, and guineas, strung on ribbons of all colors, for cuttlefish. In this magnificent cage, on a swinging ladder that turned with the wind, hopped and twittered thousands of birds of all sizes and countries—humming-birds, parrots, cardinal-birds, linnets, canaries, and every other species. All this feathered world was warbling the same song, each in his jargon. Violet, who understood the language of birds as well as that of plants, translated it for the benefit of the maids of honor, who were greatly astonished to find such rare prudence among canaries. The chorus ran as follows:

"Freedom is folly,
Hurrah for the cage!
Whoever is sage
Will come hither to stay,
To eat, and to drink, and be jolly,
Where, for all these delights,
He has only to pay
By warbling a lay.
Freedom is folly,
Hurrah for the cage!"

A deep silence followed these joyful cries. Then an old red and green parrot, with a grave and serious air, raised one claw, and, swinging on his perch, sang in a nasal tone, or rather croaked, this solo:

"The nightingale in black vest,
Who never comes out of his nest
Till the sun has gone down in the west,
To sing to his mistress the moon,
Is a fellow unpleasant to see.
He is proud as a king, though he lives
Like a beggar, yet still he believes
No bird is so happy as he.
Then his voice—what a bore!
We should, *entre nous*,
Without more ado,
Hang all such fools who
Good fortune refuse to adore."

And all the birds, ravished with his eloquence, began to whistle in shrill tones:

"Freedom is folly,
Hurrah for the cage!"

As the maids of honor were crowding round the magic bird-cage, the Lady of the Chinking Guineas appeared, and it may be believed that she was not the last to covet this marvel. "Child," said she to the piper, "will you sell me this cage at the same price as the carriage?"

"Willingly, madam," answered Violet, who had no other desire.

"It is a bargain," said the lady. "None but beggars would be guilty of such follies."

The night did not differ from the preceding one. Perlino, drunk with the potable gold, entered his chamber without even raising his eyes; and Violet threw herself on her mat, more wretched than ever. She sang as on the first night, and shed tears that would have melted a heart of stone, but all in vain. Perlino slept like a dethroned king, and the sobs of his mistress lulled him like the murmurs of the winds and waves. Toward midnight, Violet's three friends, grieved at her sorrow, held council. "It is not natural that he should sleep in this way," said the squirrel. "We must go in and wake him," said the mouse. "But how shall we get in?" said the bee, who had been vainly seeking a crack in the wall. "That is my business," said the mouse. And he quickly gnawed a little hole in the door large enough for the bee to glide into the room where Perlino lay asleep on his back, snoring. Angry at this calmness, the bee stung him on the lip; he sighed, and struck his cheek a blow, but did not wake.

"He has been put to sleep," said the bee, returning. "There is magic in it. What shall we do?"

"Wait!" said the mouse, who had not let his teeth rust. "It is my turn to go into the room. I will awaken him, should I eat his heart out."

"No, no," said Violet, "I will not have my Perlino hurt."

The mouse was already in the room. To jump on the bed and creep under the coverlid was play for the cousin of the rats. He went straight to Perlino's breast, but before making a hole in it he listened. The heart did not beat; there was no more doubt—Perlino was enchanted.

Just as the mouse brought back this news, day broke, and the lady appeared, smiling maliciously. Violet, furious at having been played with, gnawed her fingers in anger. She nevertheless made a low courtesy to the countess, saying to herself, "To-morrow I will have my revenge."

## IX

### PATITA, PATITE

This time Violet went down to the courtyard with more courage; her hope had revived. As on the day before, she found the maids of honor there still spinning on their distaffs. "Come, handsome piper," they cried, laughing, "what have you to show us now?"

"Something that will please you, fair ladies," answered Violet.

"'Patita, Patite,
Look well and you'll see.'"

The squirrel threw one of his nuts on the ground, and a puppet-show instantly appeared. The curtain rose. The scene represented a court of justice. At the upper end of the room, on a throne hung with red velvet spangled with stars, sat the judge, a huge cat of respectable appearance, notwithstanding a few crumbs of cheese that remained on his long whiskers. Buried in contemplation, with his hands crossed under his long sleeves and his eyes closed, you would have thought him sleeping, if justice ever slumbered in the kingdom of cats.

On the side was a wooden bench, on which were chained three mice, whose teeth had been filed and ears cut off by way of precaution. They were suspected, which at Naples means convicted, of having looked too closely at a rind of musty bacon. Opposite the culprits was a canopy of black cloth, on which was inscribed, in letters of gold, the sentence of the great poet and magician, Virgil,

"CRUSH THE MICE, BUT SPARE THE CATS"

Under the canopy stood the public prosecutor, a weasel with a receding forehead, red eyes, and pointed tongue, who,

with one hand on his heart, was eloquently demanding that the law should condemn the mice to the gallows. His words flowed like a silvery fountain; he prayed for the death of these wretched little animals in so tender and pathetic a voice that one became indignant at their obduracy. They seemed wholly lacking in their duty in not themselves offering their guilty heads to calm the feelings and dry the tears of this excellent weasel, whose voice was choked with such emotion.

When the prosecutor had finished his touching speech, a young rat, scarcely weaned, rose to defend the culprits. He had just adjusted his spectacles, taken off his cap, and turned down his sleeves, when the cat, through respect for free defense and for the interest of the accused, forbade him to speak; after which, in a solemn voice, Master Grimalkin soundly rated the accused, witnesses, society, heaven, earth, and rats. Then, putting on his cap, he pronounced an avenging sentence, condemning these guilty animals to be hung and flayed on the spot, their goods to be confiscated, their memory to be branded, and themselves to pay the costs of the suit; imprisonment for debt being limited, however, to five years, as it was necessary to be humane even to villains.

The farce played, the curtain fell.

"How natural it is!" cried the Lady of the Chinking Guineas. "It is the justice of cats copied to the life. Shepherd or sorcerer, whatever you may be, sell me your star chamber."

"At the same price, madam," answered Violet.

"You shall sleep here to-night," returned the countess.

"Yes, madam," replied Violet; adding to herself, "May you repay me for all the harm you have done me!"

While the comedy was being played in the courtyard, the squirrel had not wasted his time. By dint of climbing over the roofs, he had finally discovered Perlino eating figs in the garden. From the roof it was an easy matter to leap to a tree, and from the tree to a thicket, until he at length reached Perlino, who was playing morra with his shadow, a sure way of always winning. To play morra, one player holds up one or

more fingers, and the other bets at the same instant how many he will hold up.

"My friend," said the squirrel, "solitude has its charms; but you do not look as if playing alone amused you much; suppose we have a game together."

"Bah!" said Perlino, "your fingers are too short, and you are nothing but an animal."

"Short fingers are not always a fault," replied the squirrel; "I have seen more than one man hung whose only crime was that of having them too long; and if I am an animal, Master Perlino, at least I am a wide-awake animal. That is better than having so much wit and sleeping like a dormouse. If Happiness ever knocks at my door in the night, at least I shall be up to let it in."

"Speak clearly," said Perlino. "Something strange has been the matter with me for the last two days. My head is heavy and my heart sorrowful, and I have horrible dreams. What is the reason?"

"Guess!" said the squirrel. "Do not drink and you will not sleep; do not sleep and you will see many things. A word to the wise is sufficient." Saying this, he sprang on a branch and disappeared.

Since Perlino had lived in retirement, reason had come to him. Nothing makes one so wicked as being dull in company; nothing makes one so wise as being dull alone. At supper he studied the face and smile of the Lady of the Chinking Guineas. He seemed as gay as usual, but every time that she gave him the cup of forgetfulness, he went to the window, pretending to admire the beauty of the evening, and threw the gold into the garden, where it fell, it is said, on some white beetles that were burrowing in the ground, and from that time the cockchafers have been golden.

## X

### THE RECOGNITION

On entering his room, Perlino noticed the piper looking at him mournfully, but he did not stop for any questions, such was his haste to be alone to see whether happiness would knock at his door, and in what form it would come. His anxiety was not of long duration. He was not yet in bed when he heard Violet's sweet and plaintive voice, reminding him, in the most tender terms, how she had molded and made him with her own hands; how it was to her prayers that he owed his life; how, notwithstanding, he had suffered himself to be seduced and carried off; and how she had pursued him with such toil and pains. Violet also told him, in still more touching accents, how she had watched for the last two nights at his door, and, to obtain this favor, had given away treasures worthy of a king without obtaining a single word from him; and how this night was the end of her hopes and life.

On listening to these words, which pierced his soul, it seemed to Perlino that he had awakened from a dream, and that a cloud fell from his eyes. He opened the door, and softly called Violet, who threw herself into his arms weeping. He attempted to speak, but she stopped him. We always believe those we love, and there are moments when we are too happy for anything but tears.

"Let us go," said Perlino; "let us quit this hateful dungeon."

"To go is not so easy, Master Perlino," answered the squirrel; "the Lady of the Chinking Guineas does not willingly let go of what she has in her clutches. We have exhausted all our gifts in awakening you, and to save you a miracle is needed."

"Perhaps I have a means," said Perlino, whose wit grew as the sap rises in the trees in springtime.

He took the cornet which contained the magic powder, and made his way to the stable, followed by Violet and the three friends, saddled the best horse, and, walking softly, reached the gate where the jailer was sleeping, his keys in his belt. At the sound of footsteps the man awoke and started up. Before he had time to open his mouth, Perlino poured the potable gold down his throat, at the risk of suffocating him; but, instead of complaining, he began to smile, and fell back in his chair, closing his eyes, and stretching out his hands for more. To seize the bunch of keys, open the gate, shut it again, triple lock it, and throw the keys of perdition into the ditch to imprison covetousness forever, was the work of an instant. Unhappily, Perlino forgot the keyhole, which left room enough for it to escape, and invade the human heart anew.

At length they were free and on the road homeward, both mounted on the same horse, Perlino in front and Violet behind. She wound her arm round the neck of her beloved, and clasped him to her, to be sure that his heart was still beating. Perlino continually turned his head to see the face of his dear Violet, and to behold that smile which he was in constant fear of losing. Fear and prudence were forgotten; and if the squirrel had not more than once caught the reins to keep the horse from stumbling or going astray, who knows but the travelers would still be on the road?

I leave you to imagine the joy of Beppo at recovering his daughter and son-in-law. He seemed the youngest of the household. He laughed all day long without knowing why, and wished to dance with everybody. He lost his senses to such a degree that he doubled the salaries of his clerks and settled a pension on his cashier, who had served him only thirty-six years. Nothing blinds us like happiness. The wedding was magnificent, but this time they took care to try their friends. The bees came from twenty leagues round, bringing a beautiful cake of honey, and the ball ended with a tarantella of mice and a schottische of squirrels, which was long talked of in Pæstum. When the sun drove away the guests, Violet and Perlino kept on dancing, and nothing could stop them. Beppo,

who was wiser, made a fine speech to show them that they were no longer children, and that people do not marry for amusement. They threw themselves into his arms, laughing. A father's heart is always weak; he took them by the hand, and danced with them till evening.

# *Princess Rosette*

ONCE upon a time there lived a king and queen who had two beautiful sons and one little daughter, who was so pretty that no one who saw her could help loving her. When it was time for the christening of the princess, the queen —as she always did—sent for all the fairies to be present at the ceremony, and afterward invited them to a splendid banquet.

When it was over, and they were preparing to go away, the queen said to them:

"Do not forget your usual good custom. Tell me what is going to happen to Rosette," for that was the name they had given to the princess.

But the fairies said they had left their book of magic at home, and they would come another day and tell her.

"Ah!" said the queen, "I know very well what that means —you have nothing good to say; but at least I beg that you will not hide anything from me."

So, after a great deal of persuasion, they said:

"Madam, we fear that Rosette may be the cause of great misfortunes to her brothers; they may even meet with their death through her; that is all we have been able to foresee about your dear little daughter. We are very sorry to have nothing better to tell you."

Then they went away, leaving the queen very sad, so sad that the king noticed it, and asked her what was the matter.

The queen said that she had been sitting too near the fire, and had burned all the flax that was upon her distaff.

"Oh! is that all?" said the king, and he went up into the garret and brought her down more flax than she could spin

in a hundred years. But the queen still looked sad, and the king asked her again what was the matter. She answered that she had been walking by the river and had dropped one of her green satin slippers into the water.

"Oh! if that's all," said the king, and he sent to all the shoemakers in his kingdom, and they very soon made the queen ten thousand green satin slippers, but still she looked sad. So the king asked her again what was the matter, and this time she answered that in eating her porridge too hastily she had swallowed her wedding ring. But it so happened that the king knew better, for he had the ring himself, and he said:

"Oh! you are not telling me the truth, for I have your ring here in my purse."

Then the queen was very much ashamed, and she saw that the king was vexed with her; so she told him all that the fairies had predicted about Rosette, and begged him to think how the misfortunes might be prevented.

Then it was the king's turn to look sad, and at last he said:

"I see no way of saving our sons except by having Rosette's head cut off while she is still little."

But the queen cried that she would far rather have her own head cut off, and that he had better think of something else, for she would never consent to such a thing. So they thought and thought, but they could not tell what to do, until at last the queen heard that in a great forest near the castle there was an old hermit, who lived in a hollow tree, and that people came from far and near to consult him; so she said:

"I had better go and ask his advice; perhaps he will know what to do to prevent the misfortunes which the fairies foretold."

She set out very early the next morning, mounted upon a pretty little white mule, which was shod with solid gold, and two of her ladies rode behind her on beautiful horses. When they reached the forest they dismounted, for the trees grew so thickly that the horses could not pass, and made their way

on foot to the hollow tree where the hermit lived. At first when he saw them coming he was vexed, for he was not fond of ladies; but when he recognized the queen, he said:

"You are welcome, queen. What do you come to ask of me?"

Then the queen told him all that the fairies had foreseen for Rosette, and asked what she should do, and the hermit answered that she must shut the princess up in a tower and never let her come out of it again. The queen thanked and rewarded him, and hastened back to the castle to tell the king. When he heard the news he had a great tower built as quickly as possible, and there the princess was shut up, and the king and queen and her two brothers went to see her every day that she might not be dull. The eldest brother was called "the great prince," and the second "the little prince." They loved their sister dearly, for she was the sweetest, prettiest princess who was ever seen, and the least little smile from her was worth more than a hundred pieces of gold. When Rosette was fifteen years old the great prince went to the king and asked if it would not soon be time for her to be married, and the little prince put the same question to the queen.

Their majesties were amused at them for thinking of it, but did not make any reply, and soon after both the king and the queen were taken ill, and died on the same day. Everybody was sorry, Rosette especially, and all the bells in the kingdom were tolled.

Then all the dukes and counselors put the great prince upon a golden throne, and crowned him with a diamond crown, and they all cried, "Long live the king!" And after that there was nothing but feasting and rejoicing.

The new king and his brother said to each other:

"Now that we are the masters, let us take our sister out of that dull tower which she is so tired of."

They had only to go across the garden to reach the tower, which was very high, and stood up in a corner. Rosette was busy at her embroidery, but when she saw her brothers she got up, and taking the king's hand cried:

"Good-morning, dear brother. Now that you are king, please take me out of this dull tower, for I am so tired of it."

Then she began to cry, but the king kissed her and told her to dry her tears, as that was just what they had come for, to take her out of the tower and bring her to their beautiful castle, and the prince showed her a pocketful of sugar plums he had brought for her, and said:

"Make haste, and let us get away from this ugly tower, and very soon the king will arrange a grand marriage for you."

When Rosette saw the beautiful garden, full of fruit and flowers, with green grass and sparkling fountains, she was so astonished that not a word could she say, for she had never in her life seen anything like it before. She looked about her, and ran hither and thither gathering fruit and flowers, and her little dog Frisk, who was bright green all over, and had but one ear, danced before her, crying "Bow-wow-wow," and turning head over heels in the most enchanting way.

Everybody was amused at Frisk's antics, but all of a sudden he ran away into a little wood, and the princess was following him, when, to her great delight, she saw a peacock, who was spreading his tail in the sunshine. Rosette thought she had never seen anything so pretty. She could not take her eyes off him, and there she stood entranced until the king and the prince came up and asked what was amusing her so much. She showed them the peacock and asked what it was, and they answered that it was a bird which people sometimes ate.

"What!" said the princess, "do they dare to kill that beautiful creature and eat it? I declare that I will never marry any one but the king of the peacocks, and when I am queen I will take very good care that nobody eats any of my subjects."

At this the king was very much astonished.

"But, little sister," said he, "where shall we find the king of the peacocks?"

"Oh, wherever you like, sire!" she answered, "but I will never marry any one else."

After this they took Rosette to the beautiful castle, and the peacock was brought with her, and told to walk about on the

terrace outside her windows, so that she might always see him, and then the ladies of the court came to see the princess, and they brought her beautiful presents—dresses and ribbons and sweetmeats, diamonds and pearls and dolls and embroidered slippers, and she was so well brought up, and said "Thank you!" so prettily, and was so gracious that every one went away delighted with her.

Meanwhile the king and the prince were considering how they should find the king of the peacocks, if there was such a person in the world. And first of all they had a portrait made of the princess, which was so like her that you really would not have been surprised if it had spoken to you. Then they said to her:

"Since you will not marry any one but the king of the peacocks, we are going out together into the wide world to search for him. If we find him for you we shall be very glad. In the mean time, mind you take good care of our kingdom."

Rosette thanked them for all the trouble they were taking on her account, and promised to take great care of the kingdom, and to amuse herself only by looking at the peacock, and making Frisk dance while they were away.

So they set out, and asked every one they met:

"Do you know the king of the peacocks?"

But the answer was always, "No, no."

Then they went on and on, so far that no one has ever been farther, and at last they came to the kingdom of the cockchafers.

They had never before seen such a number of cockchafers, and the buzzing was so loud that the king was afraid he should be deafened by it. He asked the most distinguished-looking cockchafer they met if he knew where they could find the king of the peacocks.

"Sire," replied the cockchafer, "his kingdom is thirty thousand leagues from this; you have come the longest way."

"And how do you know that?" said the king.

"Oh!" said the cockchafer, "we all know you very well, since we spend two or three months in your garden every year."

Thereupon the king and the prince made great friends with him, and they all walked arm in arm and dined together, and afterward the cockchafer showed them all the curiosities of his strange country, where the tiniest green leaf costs a gold piece and more. Then they set out again to finish their journey, and this time, as they knew the way, they were not long upon the road. It was easy to guess that they had come to the right place, for they saw peacocks in every tree, and their cries could be heard a long way off.

When they reached the city they found it full of men and women who were dressed entirely in peacocks' feathers, which were evidently thought prettier than anything else.

They soon met the king, who was driving about in a beautiful little golden carriage which glittered with diamonds, and was drawn at full speed by twelve peacocks. The king and prince were delighted to see that the king of the peacocks was as handsome as possible. He had curly golden hair and was very pale, and he wore a crown of peacocks' feathers.

When he saw Rosette's brothers he knew at once that they were strangers, and stopping his carriage he sent for them to speak to him. When they had greeted him they said:

"Sire, we have come from very far away to show you a beautiful portrait."

So saying, they drew from their traveling-bag the picture of Rosette.

The king looked at it in silence a long time, but at last he said:

"I could not have believed that there was such a beautiful princess in the world!"

"Indeed, she is really a hundred times as pretty as that," said her brothers.

"I think you must be making fun of me," replied the king of the peacocks.

"Sire," said the prince, "my brother is a king, like yourself. He is called 'the king,' I am called 'the prince,' and that is the portrait of our sister, the Princess Rosette. We have come to ask if you would like to marry her. She is as good as she

is beautiful, and we will give her a bushel of gold pieces for her dowry."

"Oh, with all my heart!" replied the king, "and I will make her very happy. She shall have whatever she likes, and I shall love her dearly; only I warn you that if she is not as pretty as you have told me, I will have your heads cut off."

"Oh, certainly, we quite agree to that!" said the brothers in one breath.

"Very well. Off with you into prison, and stay there until the princess arrives," said the king of the peacocks.

And the princes were so sure that Rosette was far prettier than her portrait that they went without a murmur. They were very kindly treated, and that they might not feel dull the king came often to see them. As for Rosette's portrait, that was taken up to the palace, and the king did nothing but gaze at it all day and all night.

As the king and the prince had to stay in prison, they sent a letter to the princess telling her to pack up all her treasures as quickly as possible and come to them, as the king of the peacocks was waiting to marry her; but they did not say that they were in prison, for fear of making her uneasy.

When Rosette received the letter she was so delighted that she ran about telling every one that the king of the peacocks was found, and she was going to marry him.

Guns were fired and fireworks set off. Every one had as many cakes and sweetmeats as he wanted, and for three days everybody who came to see the princess was presented with a slice of bread and jam, a nightingale's egg, and some hippocras. After having thus entertained her friends, she distributed her dolls among them, and left her brother's kingdom to the care of the wisest old men of the city, telling them to take charge of everything, not to spend any money, but save it all up until the king should return, and above all, not to forget to feed her peacock. Then she set out, only taking with her her nurse and the nurse's daughter, and the little green dog Frisk.

They took a boat and put out to sea, carrying with them the bushel of gold pieces, and enough dresses to last the prin-

cess ten years if she wore two every day, and they did nothing but laugh and sing. The nurse asked the boatman:

"Can you take us, can you take us to the kingdom of the peacocks?"

But he answered:

"Oh, no! oh, no!"

Then she said:

"You must take us, you must take us."

And he answered:

"Very soon, very soon."

Then the nurse said:

"Will you take us? will you take us?"

And the boatman answered:

"Yes, yes."

Then she whispered in his ear:

"Do you want to make your fortune?"

And he said:

"Certainly I do."

"I can tell you how to get a bag of gold," said she.

"I ask nothing better," said the boatman.

"Well," said the nurse, "to-night, when the princess is asleep, you must help me to throw her into the sea, and when she is drowned I will put her beautiful clothes upon my daughter, and we will take her to the king of the peacocks, who will be only too glad to marry her, and as your reward you shall have your boat full of diamonds."

The boatman was very much surprised at this proposal and said:

"But what a pity to drown such a pretty princess!"

However, at last the nurse persuaded him to help her, and when the night came and the princess was fast asleep as usual, with Frisk curled up on his own cushion at the foot of her bed, the wicked nurse fetched the boatman and her daughter, and between them they picked up the princess, feather bed, mattress, pillows, blankets and all, and threw her into the sea, without even waking her. Now, luckily, the princess' bed was entirely stuffed with phœnix feathers, which are very rare, and

have the property of always floating upon water, so Rosette went on swimming about as if she had been in a boat. After a little while she began to feel very cold, and turned round so often that she woke Frisk, who started up, and having a very good nose, smelled the soles and herrings so close to him that he began to bark. He barked so long and so loud that he woke all the other fish, who came swimming up round the princess' bed, and poking at it with their great heads. As for her, she said to herself:

"How our boat does rock upon the water! I am really glad that I am not often as uncomfortable as I have been to-night."

The wicked nurse and the boatman, who were by this time quite a long way off, heard Frisk barking, and said to each other:

"That horrid little animal and his mistress are drinking our health in sea-water now. Let us make haste to land, for we must be quite near the city of the king of the peacocks."

The king had sent a hundred carriages to meet them, drawn by every kind of strange animal. There were lions, bears, wolves, stags, horses, buffaloes, eagles, and peacocks. The carriage intended for the Princess Rosette had six blue monkeys, which could turn somersaults, and dance on a tight-rope, and do many other charming tricks. Their harness was all of crimson velvet with gold buckles, and behind the carriage walked sixty beautiful ladies chosen by the king to wait upon Rosette and amuse her.

The nurse had taken all the pains imaginable to deck out her daughter. She put on her Rosette's prettiest frock, and covered her with diamonds from head to foot. But she was so ugly that nothing could make her look nice, and what was worse, she was sulky and ill-tempered, and did nothing but grumble all the time.

When she stepped from the boat and the escort sent by the king of the peacocks caught sight of her, they were so surprised that they could not say a single word.

"Now then, look alive," cried the false princess. "If you

don't bring me something to eat I will have all your heads cut off!"

Then they whispered one to another:

"Here's a pretty state of things! she is as wicked as she is ugly. What a bride for our poor king! She certainly was not worth bringing from the other end of the world!"

But she went on ordering them all about, and for no fault at all would give slaps and pinches to every one she could reach.

As the procession was so long it advanced but slowly, and the nurse's daughter sat up in her carriage trying to look like a queen. But the peacocks, who were sitting upon every tree waiting to salute her, and who had made up their minds to cry, "Long live our beautiful queen!" when they caught sight of the false bride could not help crying instead:

"Oh, how ugly she is!"

Which offended her so much that she said to the guards:

"Make haste and kill all these insolent peacocks who have dared to insult me."

But the peacocks only flew away, laughing at her.

The rogue of a boatman, who noticed all this, said softly to the nurse:

"This is a bad business for us, gossip; your daughter ought to have been prettier."

But she answered:

"Be quiet, stupid, or you will spoil everything."

Now they told the king that the princess was approaching.

"Well," said he, "did her brothers tell me truly? Is she prettier than her portrait?"

"Sire," they answered, "if she were as pretty that would do very well."

"That's true," said the king. "I for one shall be quite satisfied if she is. Let us go and meet her." For they knew by the uproar that she had arrived, but they could not tell what all the shouting was about. The king thought he could hear the words:

"How ugly she is! How ugly she is!" and he fancied they must refer to some dwarf the princess was bringing with her.

It never occurred to him that they could apply to the bride herself.

The Princess Rosette's portrait was carried at the head of the procession, and after it walked the king surrounded by his courtiers. He was all impatience to see the lovely princess, but when he caught sight of the nurse's daughter he was furiously angry, and would not advance another step, for she was really ugly enough to have frightened anybody.

"What!" he cried, "have the two rascals who are my prisoners dared to play me such a trick as this? Do they propose that I shall marry this hideous creature? Let her be shut up in my great tower, with her nurse and those who brought her here; and as for them, I will have their heads cut off."

Meanwhile the king and the prince, who knew that their sister must have arrived, had made themselves smart, and sat expecting every minute to be summoned to greet her. So when the jailer came with soldiers, and carried them down into a black dungeon which swarmed with toads and bats, and where they were up to their necks in water, nobody could have been more surprised and dismayed than they were.

"This is a dismal kind of wedding," they said. "What can have happened that we should be treated like this? They must mean to kill us."

And this idea annoyed them very much. Three days passed before they heard any news, and then the king of the peacocks came and berated them through a hole in the wall.

"You have called yourselves king and prince," he cried, "to try and make me marry your sister, but you are nothing but beggars, not worth the water you drink. I mean to make short work with you, and the sword is being sharpened that will cut off your heads!"

"King of the peacocks," answered the king angrily, "you had better take care what you are about. I am as good a king as yourself, and have a splendid kingdom, and robes and crowns, and plenty of good red gold to do what I like with. You are pleased to jest about having our heads cut off. Perhaps you think we have stolen something from you?"

At first the king of the peacocks was taken aback by this bold speech, and had half a mind to send all the culprits away together; but his prime minister declared that it would never do to let such a trick as that pass unpunished, everybody would laugh at him. So the accusation was drawn up against them, that they were impostors, and that they had promised the king a beautiful princess in marriage who, when she arrived, proved to be an ugly peasant girl.

This accusation was read to the prisoners, who cried out that they had spoken the truth, that their sister was indeed a princess more beautiful than the day, and that there was some mystery about all this which they could not fathom. Therefore they demanded seven days in which to prove their innocence. The king of the peacocks was so angry that he would hardly even grant them this favor, but at last he was persuaded to do so.

While all this was going on at court, let us see what had been happening to the real princess. When the day broke she and Frisk were equally astonished at finding themselves alone upon the sea, with no boat and no one to help them. The princess cried and cried, until even the fishes were sorry for her.

"Alas!" she said, "the king of the peacocks must have ordered me to be thrown into the sea because he had changed his mind and did not want to marry me. But how strange of him, when I should have loved him so much, and we should have been so happy together!"

And then she cried harder than ever, for she could not help still loving him. So for two days they floated up and down the sea, wet and shivering with the cold, and so hungry that when the princess saw some oysters she caught them, and she and Frisk both ate some, though they didn't like them at all. When night came the princess was so frightened that she said to Frisk:

"Oh, do please keep on barking for fear the soles should come and eat us up!"

Now it happened that they had floated close in to the shore,

where a poor old man lived all alone in a little cottage. When he heard Frisk's barking he thought to himself:

"There must have been a shipwreck!" (for no dogs ever passed that way by any chance), and he went out to see if he could be of any use. He soon saw the princess and Frisk floating up and down, and Rosette, stretching out her hands to him, cried:

"Oh, good old man, do save me, or I shall die of cold and hunger!"

When he heard her cry out so piteously he was very sorry for her, and ran back into his house to fetch a long boat-hook. Then he waded into the water up to his chin, and after being nearly drowned once or twice he at last succeeded in getting hold of the princess' bed and dragging it on shore.

Rosette and Frisk were joyful enough to find themselves once more on dry land, and the princess thanked the old man heartily; then, wrapping herself up in her blankets, she daintily picked her way up to the cottage on her little bare feet. There the old man lighted a fire of straw, and then drew from an old box his wife's dress and shoes, which the princess put on, and thus roughly clad looked as charming as possible, and Frisk danced his very best to amuse her.

The old man saw that Rosette must be some great lady, for her bed coverings were all of satin and gold. He begged that she would tell him all her history, as she might safely trust him. The princess told him everything, weeping bitterly again at the thought that it was by the king's orders that she had been thrown overboard.

"And now, my daughter, what is to be done?" said the old man. "You are a great princess, accustomed to fare daintily, and I have nothing to offer you but black bread and radishes, which will not suit you at all. Shall I go and tell the king of the peacocks that you are here? If he sees you he will certainly wish to marry you."

"Oh, no!" cried Rosette, "he must be wicked, since he tried to drown me. Don't let us tell him, but if you have a little basket give it to me."

The old man gave her a basket, and tying it round Frisk's neck she said to him: "Go and find out the best cooking-pot in the town and bring the contents to me."

Away went Frisk, and as there was no better dinner cooking in all the town than the king's, he adroitly took the cover off the pot and brought all it contained to the princess, who said:

"Now go back to the pantry, and bring the best of everything you find there."

So Frisk went back and filled his basket with white bread, and red wine, and every kind of sweetmeat, until it was almost too heavy for him to carry.

When the king of the peacocks wanted his dinner there was nothing in the pot and nothing in the pantry. All the courtiers looked at one another in dismay, and the king was terribly cross.

"Oh, well!" he said, "if there is no dinner I cannot dine, but take care that plenty of things are roasted for supper."

When evening came the princess said to Frisk:

"Go into the town and find out the best kitchen, and bring me all the nicest morsels that are being roasted upon the spit."

Frisk did as he was told, and as he knew of no better kitchen than the king's, he went in softly, and when the cook's back was turned took everything that was upon the spit. As it happened it was all done to a turn, and looked so good that it made him hungry only to see it. He carried his basket to the princess, who at once sent him back to the pantry to bring all the tarts and sugar-plums that had been prepared for the king's supper.

The king, as he had had no dinner, was very hungry and wanted his supper early, but when he asked for it, lo, and behold it was all gone, and he had to go to bed half starved and in a terrible temper. The next day the same thing happened, and the next, so that for three days the king got nothing at all to eat, because just when the dinner or the supper was ready to be served it mysteriously disappeared. At last the prime minister began to be afraid that the king would be starved to death, so he resolved to hide himself in some dark corner of

the kitchen, and never take his eyes off the cooking-pot. His surprise was great when he presently saw a little green dog with one ear slip softly into the kitchen, uncover the pot, transfer all its contents to his basket, and run off. The prime minister followed hastily, and tracked him all through the town to the cottage of the good old man; then he ran back to the king and told that he had found out where all his dinners and suppers went. The king, who was very much astonished, said he should like to go and see for himself. So he set out, accompanied by the prime minister and a guard of archers, and arrived just in time to find the old man and the princess finishing his dinner.

The king ordered that they should be seized and bound with ropes, and Frisk also.

When they were brought back to the palace some one told the king, who said:

"To-day is the last day of the respite granted to those impostors; they shall have their heads cut off at the same time as these stealers of my dinner." Then the old man went down on his knees before the king and begged for time to tell him everything. While he spoke the king for the first time looked attentively at the princess, because he was sorry to see how she cried, and when he heard the old man saying that her name was Rosette, and that she had been treacherously thrown into the sea, he turned head over heels three times without stopping, in spite of being quite weak from hunger, and ran to embrace her, and untied the ropes which bound her with his own hands, declaring that he loved her with all his heart.

Messengers were sent to bring the princes out of prison, and they came very sadly, believing that they were to be executed at once; the nurse and her daughter and the boatman were brought also. As soon as they came in Rosette ran to embrace her brothers, while the traitors threw themselves down before her and begged for mercy. The king and the princess were so happy that they freely forgave them, and as for the good old man he was splendidly rewarded, and spent the rest of his days in the palace. The king of the peacocks made ample

amends to the king and prince for the way in which they had been treated, and did everything in his power to show how sorry he was.

The nurse restored to Rosette all her dresses and jewels, and the bushel of gold pieces; the wedding was held at once, and they all lived happily ever after—even to Frisk, who enjoyed the greatest luxury, and never had anything worse than the wing of a partridge for dinner all the rest of his life.

# *The Son of Seven Queens*

ONCE upon a time there lived a king who had seven queens, but no children. This was a great grief to him, especially when he remembered that on his death there would be no heir to inherit the kingdom.

Now it happened one day that a poor old fakir came to the king and said: "Your prayers are heard, your desire shall be accomplished, and one of your seven queens shall bear a son."

The king's delight at this promise knew no bounds, and he gave orders for appropriate festivities to be prepared against the coming event throughout the length and breadth of the land.

Meanwhile the seven queens lived luxuriously in a splendid palace, attended by hundreds of female slaves, and fed to their hearts' content on sweetmeats and confectionery.

Now the king was very fond of hunting, and one day, before he started, the seven queens sent him a message saying: "May it please our dearest lord not to hunt toward the north to-day, for we have dreamed bad dreams, and fear lest evil should befall you."

The king, to allay their anxiety, promised regard for their wishes, and set out toward the south; but as luck would have it, although he hunted diligently, he found no game. Nor had he more success to the east or west, so that, being a keen sportsman, and determined not to go home empty-handed, he forgot all about his promise and turned to the north. Here also he was at first unsuccessful, but just as he had made up his mind to give up for that day, a white hind with golden horns and silver hoofs flashed past him into a thicket. So quickly did it pass that he scarcely saw it; nevertheless, a burn-

ing desire to capture and possess the beautiful strange creature filled his breast. He instantly ordered his attendants to form a ring round the thicket, and so encircle the hind; then, gradually narrowing the circle, he pressed forward till he could distinctly see the white hind panting in the midst. Nearer and nearer he advanced, till, just as he thought to lay hold of the beautiful strange creature, it gave one mighty bound, leaped clean over the king's head, and fled toward the mountains. Forgetful of all else, the king, setting spurs to his horse, followed at full speed. On, on he galloped, leaving his retinue far behind, keeping the white hind in view, never drawing bridle until, finding himself in a narrow ravine with no outlet, he reined in his steed. Before him stood a miserable hovel, into which, being tired after his long, unsuccessful chase, he entered to ask for a drink of water. An old woman, seated in the hut at a spinning-wheel, answered his request by calling to her daughter, and immediately from an inner room came a maiden so lovely and charming, so white-skinned and golden-haired, that the king was transfixed by astonishment at seeing so beautiful a sight in the wretched hovel.

She held the vessel of water to the king's lips, and as he drank he looked into her eyes, and then it became clear to him that the girl was no other than the white hind with the golden horns and silver feet he had chased so far.

Her beauty bewitched him, so he fell on his knees, begging her to return with him as his bride; but she only laughed, saying seven queens were quite enough even for a king to manage. However, when he would take no refusal, but implored her to have pity on him, promising her everything she could desire, she replied: "Give me the eyes of your seven queens, and then perhaps I may believe you mean what you say."

The king was so carried away by the glamour of the white hind's magical beauty that he went home at once, had the eyes of his seven queens taken out, and, after throwing the poor blind creatures into a noisome dungeon whence they could not escape, set off once more for the hovel in the ravine, bearing with him his horrible offering. But the white hind only

laughed cruelly when she saw the fourteen eyes, and threading them as a necklace, flung it round her mother's neck, saying: "Wear that, little mother, as a keepsake, while I am away in the king's palace."

Then she went back with the bewitched monarch, as his bride, and he gave her the seven queens' rich clothes and jewels to wear, the seven queens' palace to live in, and the seven queens' slaves to wait upon her; so that she really had everything even a witch could desire.

Now, very soon after the seven wretched hapless queens had their eyes torn out, and were cast into prison, a baby was born to the youngest of the queens. It was a handsome boy, but the other queens were very jealous that the youngest among them should be so fortunate. But though at first they disliked the handsome little boy, he soon proved so useful to them, that ere long they all looked on him as their son. Almost as soon as he could walk about he began scraping at the mud wall of their dungeon, and in an incredibly short space of time had made a hole big enough for him to crawl through. Through this he disappeared, returning in an hour or so laden with sweetmeats, which he divided equally among the seven blind queens.

As he grew older he enlarged the hole, and slipped out two or three times every day to play with the little nobles in the town. No one knew who the tiny boy was, but everybody liked him, and he was so full of funny tricks and antics, so merry and bright, that he was sure to be rewarded by some girdle-cakes, a handful of parched grain, or some sweetmeats. All these things he brought home to his seven mothers, as he loved to call the seven blind queens, who by his help lived on in their dungeon when all the world thought they had starved to death ages before.

At last, when he was quite a big lad, he one day took his bow and arrow, and went out to seek for game. Coming by chance past the palace where the white hind lived in wicked splendor and magnificence, he saw some pigeons fluttering round the white marble turrets, and, taking good aim, shot one dead. It came tumbling past the very window where the

white queen was sitting; she rose to see what was the matter, and looked out. At the first glance of the handsome young lad standing there bow in hand, she knew by witchcraft that it was the king's son.

She nearly died of envy and spite, determining to destroy the lad without delay; therefore, sending a servant to bring him to her presence, she asked him if he would sell her the pigeon he had just shot.

"No," replied the sturdy lad, "the pigeon is for my seven blind mothers, who live in the noisome dungeon, and who would die if I did not bring them food."

"Poor souls!" cried the cunning white witch. "Would you not like to bring them their eyes again? Give me the pigeon, my dear, and I faithfully promise to show you where to find them."

Hearing this, the lad was delighted beyond measure, and gave up the pigeon at once. Whereupon the white queen told him to seek her mother without delay, and ask for the eyes which she wore as a necklace.

"She will not fail to give them," said the cruel queen, "if you show her this token on which I have written what I want done."

So saying, she gave the lad a piece of broken potsherd, with these words inscribed on it: "Kill the bearer at once, and sprinkle his blood like water!"

Now, as the son of seven queens could not read, he took the fatal message cheerfully, and set off to find the white queen's mother.

While he was journeying he passed through a town where every one of the inhabitants looked so sad that he could not help asking what was the matter. They told him it was because the king's only daughter refused to marry; therefore when her father died there would be no heir to the throne. They greatly feared she must be out of her mind, for though every good-looking young man in the kingdom had been shown to her, she declared she would only marry one who was the son of seven mothers, and who had ever heard of such a

thing? The king, in despair, had ordered every man who entered the city gates to be led before the princess; so, much to the lad's impatience, for he was in an immense hurry to find his mother's eyes, he was dragged into the presence-chamber.

No sooner did the princess catch sight of him than she blushed, and, turning to the king, said, "Dear father, this is my choice!"

Never were such rejoicings as these few words produced. The inhabitants nearly went wild with joy, but the son of seven queens said he would not marry the princess unless they first let him recover his mothers' eyes. When the beautiful bride heard his story, she asked to see the potsherd, for she was very learned and clever. Seeing the treacherous words, she said nothing, but taking another similar-shaped bit of potsherd, she wrote on it these words: "Take care of this lad, giving him all he desires," and returned it to the son of seven queens, who, none the wiser, set off on his quest.

Ere long he arrived at the hovel in the ravine where the white witch's mother, a hideous old creature, grumbled dreadfully on reading the message, especially when the lad asked for the necklace of eyes. Nevertheless she took it off and gave it him, saying: "There are only thirteen of 'em now, for I lost one last week."

The lad, however, was only too glad to get any at all, so he hurried home as fast as he could to his seven mothers, and gave two eyes apiece to the six elder queens; but to the youngest he gave one, saying: "Dearest little mother!—I will be your other eye always!"

After this he set off to marry the princess, as he had promised, but when passing by the white queen's palace he saw some pigeons on the roof. Drawing his bow, he shot one, and it came fluttering past the window. The white hind looked out, and lo! there was the king's son alive and well.

She cried with hatred and disgust, but sending for the lad, asked him how he had returned so soon, and when she heard how he had brought home the thirteen eyes, and given them to the seven blind queens, she could hardly restrain

her rage. Nevertheless she pretended to be charmed with his success, and told him that if he would give her this pigeon also, she would reward him with the Jogi's wonderful cow, whose milk flows all day long, and makes a pond as big as a kingdom. The lad, nothing loth, gave her the pigeon; whereupon, as before, she bade him go and ask her mother for the cow, and gave him a potsherd whereon was written, "Kill this lad without fail, and sprinkle his blood like water!"

But on the way the son of seven queens looked in on the princess, just to tell her how he came to be delayed, and she, after reading the message on the potsherd, gave him another in its stead; so that when the lad reached the old hag's hut and asked her for the Jogi's cow, she could not refuse, but told the boy how to find it; and bidding him of all things not to be afraid of the eighteen thousand demons who kept watch and ward over the treasure, told him to be off before she became too angry at her daughter's foolishness in thus giving away so many good things.

Then the lad bravely did as he had been told. He journeyed on and on till he came to a milk-white pond, guarded by the eighteen thousand demons. They were really frightful to behold, but, plucking up courage, he whistled a tune as he walked through them, looking neither to the right nor the left. By and by he came upon the Jogi's cow, tall, white, and beautiful, while the Jogi himself, who was king of all the demons, sat milking her day and night, and the milk streamed from her udder, filling the milk-white tank.

The Jogi, seeing the lad, called out fiercely, "What do you want here?"

Then the lad answered, according to the old hag's bidding: "I want your skin, for King Indra is making a new kettle-drum, and says your skin is nice and tough."

Upon this the Jogi began to shiver and shake (for no Jinn or Jogi dares disobey King Indra's command), and, falling at the lad's feet, cried: "If you will spare me I will give you anything I possess, even my beautiful white cow!"

To this the son of seven queens, after a little pretended

hesitation, agreed, saying that after all it would not be difficult to find a nice tough skin like the Jogi's elsewhere; so driving the wonderful cow before him, he set off homeward. The seven queens were delighted to possess so marvelous an animal, and though they toiled from morning till night making curds and whey, besides selling milk to the confectioners, they could not use half the cow gave, and became richer and richer day by day.

Seeing them so comfortably off, the son of seven queens started with a light heart to marry the princess; but when passing the white hind's palace he could not resist sending a bolt at some pigeons that were cooing on the parapet. One fell dead just beneath the window where the white queen was sitting. Looking out, she saw the lad, hale and hearty, standing before her, and grew whiter than ever with rage and spite.

She sent for him to ask how he had returned so soon, and when she heard how kindly her mother had received him, she very nearly had a fit. However, she dissembled her feelings as well as she could, and, smiling sweetly, said she was glad to have been able to fulfil her promise, and that if he would give her this third pigeon, she would do yet more for him than she had done before, by giving him the millionfold rice, which ripens in one night.

The lad was of course delighted at the very idea, and, giving up the pigeon, set off on his quest, armed as before with a potsherd, on which was written: "Do not fail this time. Kill the lad, and sprinkle his blood like water!"

But when he looked in on his princess, just to prevent her becoming anxious about him, she asked to see the potsherd as usual, and substituted another, on which was written: "Yet again give this lad all he requires, for his blood shall be as your blood!"

Now when the old hag saw this, and heard how the lad wanted the millionfold rice which ripens in a single night, she fell into the most furious rage, but being terribly afraid of her daughter, she controlled herself, and bade the boy go and find the field guarded by eighteen millions of demons, warning

him on no account to look back after having plucked the tallest spike of rice, which grew in the center.

So the son of seven queens set off, and soon came to the field where, guarded by eighteen millions of demons, the millionfold rice grew. He walked on bravely, looking neither to the right nor left, till he reached the center and plucked the tallest ear, but as he turned homeward a thousand sweet voices rose behind him, crying in tenderest accents: "Pluck me too! oh, please pluck me too!" He looked back, and lo! there was nothing left of him but a little heap of ashes!

Now as time passed by and the lad did not return, the old hag grew uneasy, remembering the message "His blood shall be as your blood"; so she set off to see what had happened.

Soon she came to the heap of ashes, and knowing by her arts what it was, she took a little water, and kneading the ashes into a paste, formed it into the likeness of a man; then, putting a drop of blood from her little finger into its mouth, she blew on it, and instantly the son of seven queens started up as well as ever.

"Don't you disobey orders again!" grumbled the old hag, "or next time I'll leave you alone. Now be off, before I repent of my kindness!"

So the son of seven queens returned joyfully to his seven mothers, who, by the aid of the millionfold rice, soon became the richest people in the kingdom. Then they celebrated their son's marriage to the clever princess with all imaginable pomp; but the bride was so clever, she would not rest until she had made known her husband to his father, and punished the wicked white witch. So she made her husband build a palace exactly like the one in which the seven queens had lived, and in which the white witch now dwelt in splendor. Then, when all was prepared, she bade her husband give a grand feast to the king. Now the king had heard much of the mysterious son of seven queens, and his marvelous wealth, so he gladly accepted the invitation; but what was his astonishment when on entering the palace he found it was a facsimile of his own in every particular! And when his host, richly attired, led

him straight to the private hall, where on royal thrones sat the seven queens, dressed as he had last seen them, he was speechless with surprise, until the princess, coming forward, threw herself at his feet and told him the whole story. Then the king awoke from his enchantment, and his anger rose against the wicked white hind who had bewitched him so long, until he could not contain himself. So she was put to death, and her grave plowed over, and after that the seven queens returned to their own splendid palace, and everybody lived happily.

THE END